

THE  
IMITATION  
of DAVID

His godly and constant  
resolution in bearing all his  
*trialls, troubles and afflictions*  
*being a King:*

Whose example of faith, pati-  
ence, hope, obedience and deli-  
veries, thankfulness and prayer,  
is left euen for Princes, Poten-  
tates, and all true Christi-  
ans to imitate.

*Collected by way of Meditations and*  
*Prayers out of the 27. Psalm.*

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By I. N.

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TO  
THE HIGH  
and most noble,  
CHARLES, Prince  
of Wales, Duke of *Corn-*  
*wall*, and of *Yorke*, and Earle  
of *Chester*, bee here in this  
life truest honour, highest happi-  
ness, and most perfect peace,  
and after this life eter-  
nall glory in the  
Heauens.

I Know not how to  
excuse mee. (most  
gracious Prince) in  
that I haue presumed

A 3 to

## *The Epistle*

to attempt a matter of  
so high and diuine a  
subiect ( considering  
what I am) and to ad-  
venture it to your  
Highnesse ( knowing  
who you are) but that  
my heart was willing,  
& ouercame a weake  
vnderstanding, which  
( first) it may please  
your Highnesse of your  
princely clemency to  
accept, namely, the  
will

## *Dedicatory.*

will, and to pardon the deed; for I may truly protest that I intended herein nothing lesse than to be thought desirous to seeme so impudent as to giue your Highnesse the least (or to thinke that you needed any other) aduice or counsell in this behalfe, than that which you haue so plentifully receiued from him

A 4      that

## *The Epistle*

that gaue strength vnto *Dauid*, and wisdom vnto *Salomon* his son, together with the sweet fructifying seed which hath beene so diuinely sowne in your Princely breasts by the wisdom of our second *Salomon*, your most pious and most truly religious *Father*.

Humbly beseeching your Highnes to conceiue

## Dedictory.

ceiue no other intention in me, than an unwillingnesse to let slip the *Interim* of my sequestred imploiments in your Highnesse seruice (much against my will) without some exercise inwardly comfortable, though outwardly little profitable; yet if any thing vsfull (though but to the vulgar) it may pray

A s your

*The Epistle, &c.*

your Princely fauour  
being done, your  
Highnesse seruice de-  
pending; beseeching  
*the length of daies* to  
lengthen your daies to  
his glory, your honor,  
and comfort of such  
as feare God.

Your Highnesse most  
humble seruant,

*John Nerden.*

TO  
THE MOST

Illustrious, Religious,  
and most royally borne  
Princessse,

E *E*ternall happinesse,  
Hearts true content,  
L Long life in peace,  
and plenty permanent;  
I Internall and externall  
be her graces,  
S Such as to which  
Heavens Angels daigne imbraces.  
A Amidst her foes,  
Ichouah be her shield;  
B By Sea and Land,  
in trenches and in field:  
E Engrau'd b' Eliases  
Image in her brest;  
T That Queens that serue  
in same sarrounts the best;  
H Here then shall highest  
honour crowne her crest.

*Quivers*

**Q** *Quivers of Davids arrows  
may she haue;*  
**V** *Vpon her head  
Heauens helmet, her to saue.*  
**EE** *Earth, Aire and Seas,  
all Elements and Winde,*  
**N** *Nourish her happinesse,  
the Heau'ns her minde.*  
**E** *Estraited neuer  
let her foes her finde.*  
**O** *Order her actions all,  
Ichouah, right:*  
**F** *Fix in her heart  
the Target of thy might.*  
**B** *Breake thou the ranks  
and Armies of her foes,*  
**O** *O draw thy sword,  
fight for her where she goes;*  
**H** *Heim her about  
with Angels of thy might,*  
**E** *Embrace her, loue her,  
soone restore her right.*  
**M** *Make great thy name  
in marching on her side:*  
**I** *Inthrall her foes,  
and share them in their pride.*  
**A** *Affist her still,  
and still be thou her guide;  
As heartily wisheth her Highnesse  
faithfully deuoted,  
Io. Norden.*

## *The Table.*



Motieue to the Reader,  
touching *Meditation* and *Praier*.  
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Of Prayer.

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a

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The Table.

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a 3 pleased

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to  
fu  
pe  
an  
or

A MOTIVE  
to the Reader,  
touching Meditati-  
on and Prayer.

*First of Meditation.*

**M**editation is an  
inward acti-  
on of the  
soule, wher-  
in the faith-  
full exercise themselves, es-  
pecially vpon the Word  
and promise of God, vp-  
on Heauen and heauen-  
a 5 ly

*A Motiue*

ly things, arising by the attentive hearing or serious reading of the same Word, deliberate consideration of the truth and infallibility of Gods promises contained therein, and the assured performance of them, touching their future blessed and glorious being after this life, whereof the faithfull heart being assured through the testimony of Gods holy Spirit, it delights in nothing so much as continually to thinke and meditate of the same according to the words of  
Christ;

*to the Reader.*

Christ; *Where our treasure is, there are our hearts,* and thereof wee continually thinke: DAVID had his heart set vpon his treasure hid with Christ aboue, which made him to meditate & cheerefully to sing, *O, how loue I the Law of the Lord? It is my continuall meditation; yea, I will meditate in thy precepts, and consider thy waies.* So did Salomon cry out, *Blessed bee the Lord God of Israel, who spake with his mouth to David my father, and with his hand hath performed it,* 1 King. 8. 15, 16. All

### A Motiue

· All the promises of God in Scripture doe administer vnto the faithfull, matter of continuall meditation and serious consideration; and among many of his promises, his promise of defence and deliuey of his in the time of danger, trouble, and affliction, is to be often considered, for that it concerneth especially the children of God that are most afflicted: who considering *the waies of God* to be *mercy and truth*, and that what he promiset he will assuredly performe, cannot  
but

*to the Reader.*

but worke patience, and patience hope; and how can he bee without continuall holy Meditation, whose heart is with God, from whom he hopeth his helpe will come, but in Gods owne time; and therefore though wee hope, we may not make haste; though he promise to defend vs from danger, & deliuer vs in trouble, he will not so answer our expectations, as if wee knew the time when, or the manner how to be releued or defended, better than he. He will exercise his owne  
chil-

*A Motiue*

children awhile to proue  
their patience, faith and  
obedience, to cause vs to  
meditate and ponder his  
word and promise, till hee  
haue<sup>l</sup> sufficiently tried our  
constant assurance of his  
timely deliuey, for it is his  
property to come to helpe  
his, when they thinke hee  
hath most forgotten them.

How suffered he *Dauid*,  
a man chosen after his  
owne heart, to bee enuiro-  
ned with infinite dangers,  
in so much as he thought  
God had forsaken him al-  
together, and forgotten  
him,

*to the Reader.*

him, and therefore cries out, *How long wilt thou forget me Lord, for ever?* and againe hee confessed that God had giuen him his hearts desire, and that hee had not denied the request of his lips, whereby appeareth that the force of liuely faith, holy meditation, and diuine prayer, are able to make (God offended) God appeased suddenly, to remoue sorrow, and so bring ioy.

God hath promised to be a defence to the faithfull in whatsoeuer dangers, yet  
if

*A Motiue*

if we wel weigh and consider the course of Gods dealing with his owne children, and duly meditate of his power, prouidence and wisdome; wee shall finde that hee doth not alwaies come immediatly at the call of his dearest children. *DAVID* was banished and persecuted long, *Ioseph* was imprisoned long, they both prayed for deliuey, yet continued in a hard estate, which was an argument in humane reason that God cared not for them: and  
about

*to the Reader.*

about them both was innocent *Iob* long and many waies afflicted, God saw his miseries and heard his prayers, but he left him yet to be an example to vs of like expectation of Gods timely releeuing vs, and in his good time he made *Danida* King, and *Ioseph* the chiefe vnder *Pharaob* in *Egypt*, and restored *Iob* to his former, yea, to farre greater glory.

Thus doth God try his dearest children, to occasion them to know and acknowledge, that how-  
soeuer

### A Motiue

foeuer hee seeme to absent himselfe from them in their deepest dangers, and to seeme deafe (as it were) vnto their prayers, he yet hath an eie both on them and their enemies: hee was a shelter vnto *Dauid*, and curbed *Saul*; he saw *Ioseph* in prison, but with his liberty prepared his aduancement. He saw *Iobs* afflictions, but kept a hooke in Satans nostrills, that all that he did against *Iob* serued to his finall comfort.

Though therefore it happen the faithfull to be straitened

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*to the Reader.*

ted and enuironed with so many and mighty enemies and troopes of troubles, that there appeareth no euasion, no deliuary, by any visible meanes; yet there remaineth holy Meditation, patient deliberation, and serious consideration of Gods wonderfull deliuerances of his, in all like dangers: *Consider Dauid and all his troubles*, and you shall finde hee fainted not, but depended onely vpon the promises and prouidence of God, with a godly resolution, to wait the  
the

*A Motiue*

the issue of his hope, onely meditating on Gods promises, and considering his waies, and how he had before dealt with *Abraham*, *Izaak*, *Iacob*, *Noah*, *Lot*, *Moses*, and other faithfull fathers before him; the meditation and consideration of whose wonderfull deliueries cannot but work assurance in any beleeuing heart in like manner, though by vnlike and hidden meanes, in good time to be deliuered; and therefore saith *David*, by way of meditation and confirmation

*to the Reader.*

tion of his, and consequently our faith in God, *Our Fathers trusted in thee, they called vpon thee, and were heard, they prayed vnto thee and thou deliueredst them out of all their troubles;* as if hee should say in himselfe by way of Meditation, I finde by the Word of God, that he hath deliuered many before my time, that trusted in him & called vpon him, in greater dangers than I am in, why then should I doubt or despaire of like deliuary? I trust in him as these fathers trusted:

I

### *A Motiue*

I call vpon, and pray vn-  
to him as they did, there-  
fore surely hee will heare  
me, and helpe me in time  
conuenient; thus did *Da-  
uid* meditate in his trou-  
bles.

God commanded *Iacob*  
to returne from *Laban* his  
Vncle, into his countrie  
and Kindred (from whom  
and whence he fled) pro-  
mising to doe him good,  
*Gen. 32. 9.* Could *Iacob*  
doe lesse than meditate and  
thinke seriously of this  
command and promise of  
God, considering hee was  
to

*to the Reader.*

to returne to his desperately  
malicious brother *Eſau*,  
who ſought to murder  
him? yet vpon due Medi-  
tation and conſideration of  
Gods faithfull promiſe of  
defending him and doing  
him good, hee overcame  
teare by faithfull prayer,  
and the Lord appeaſed his  
brothers malice towards  
him.

Examples of like nature  
are plentiſull in holy Scrip-  
tures, as of *Mordecai* and  
the *Jewes*, *Eſter* 7. of the  
*Bethulians*, *Iudith* 7. and  
many others.

Holy

### *A Morie*

Holy meditation is most necessary, and an especiall Morie to faithfull prayer, and prayer can neuer be so powerfull as vpon holy premeditation, though short, so it be serious, for as rumination precedes digesture in cleane beasts; so holy Meditation goes before effectuall prayer in Christians.

Seeing then that there is no knde of trouble, danger, misery or affliction that can befall Gods children; but there are examples in the holy Booke of God,

*to the Reader.*

God; wherein may bee  
seene Gods outward deli-  
uery or inward comfort in  
every kinde, what need the  
faithfull to faint in any?

Search therefore the Scrip-  
tures, meditate in them,  
consider the ends and is-  
sues, the patience and pray-  
ers, of former godly men;  
and let their faith, patience  
and prayer, be paternes for  
our imitation. Then if our  
knowledge by reading and  
hearing of the Word, our  
continuall meditation in  
the Word, doe worke in  
vs through the same spirit

B

that

*A Motiue*

that guided them like assurance and faith; we cannot but adde preuailing prayer, which being without doubting or wauering, cannot but inforce (as it were) at Gods handis (who is absolutely powerfull) like deliueries out of dangers and timely releefe or release, in troubles. And he that is a religious obseruer of Gods dealing for the defence of his, and confounding his & their enemies at this day, cannot but see & approue God to be the same God in power, wil, prouidence, and readi-

*to the Reader.*

readinesse to helpe his, as  
he was in any former age  
to our fathfull fore-fathers;  
Then search the Word,  
meditate therein as *Dauid*  
did day and night, pray  
zealously and faithfully;  
and this God, even the  
euerliving and all-sufficient  
God, shall effectually per-  
forme in his good time,  
whatsoever hee hath pro-  
mised and we pray for.

B 2

Of

A Motiue.

Of Prayer.

**T**Hough faith-  
full prayer be  
powerfull to  
preuaile with  
God in and a-  
gainst all dan-  
gers, perills, & troubles, and an  
armour of tried defence against  
sin and Satan; yet few there be  
that vse it, especially as they  
ought; some not at all. Many  
there are that either say in  
their hearts there is no God,  
as *Psal. 53. 1.* or that deny  
the power of God, not ac-  
knowledging

to the Reader.

knowledging him to be Gods  
and so cannot glorifie him as  
God, Rom. 1. 21. Some also  
are or have beene so impious, as  
they absolutely have denied him,  
as Pharaoh, Exod. 5. 2. Sena-  
cherib, 2 King. 18. 13. to 30.  
Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 3. and  
others, assuming as it were the  
name of Gods unto themselves.  
They praid to none, but they as  
Gods were praid unto; whose  
examples are to be detested as  
abominable, blasphemous, and  
devilish; whose ends may onely  
serue to terrifie such (though  
never so mighty, preuailing in  
their tyranny awhile) as either  
forsake the living God, and trust  
in or pray unto them, or that  
that are no gods: such are not

### A Motiue

to be feared of them that truly trust in and pray vnto the God of hosts, as holy David did, whose example of faith, prayer, and holy resolution in all dangers, may encourage all faithfull in all their troubles, to imitate and practise the same.

The onely and chiefe refuge that this most godly King had, and the principall weapons wherewith he resisted and overcame his enemies, was fervent prayer in a lively faith.

Faithfull prayer to God is such a defence against whatsoever danger as no enemy, be he neuer so mighty, malicious, or carnally politike, can preuaile against it; for howsoeuer a man truly fearing God be beset with

(euen

to the Reader.

(euen multitudes of) enemies,  
so as no visible helpe can haue  
accesse to rescue him or to deli-  
uer him; yet if hee send this  
Messenger, faithfull prayer vn-  
to God, and wauer not in his as-  
surance, outward succour, or in-  
ward comfort, will assuredly and  
timely appeare. It was Dauids  
refuge in euery danger, when  
his perfidious Counsellor Achis-  
tophel, whose counsell was as  
it were, the Oracle of God,  
addressed his traiterous aduice  
to rebellious Absalom, he on-  
ly praied to frustrate it, and  
his deepest wisdom turned in-  
to folly, 2 Sam. 15. 31. He-  
zekiah in danger of the King  
of Assur, vsed onely prayer to  
God, and the Lord slew his

### A Motiue

enemies one hundred fourescore  
and fine thousand in one night,  
2 King. 19. Examples are in-  
finite of the force and effect of  
prayer, in so much as there is  
nothing that the faithfull want,  
but Prayer, if it be faithfull and  
feruent may obtaine, if God in  
his wisdom thinke it fit for vs  
to receiue.

Prayer is it whereby we speake  
vnto God in a heauenly kinde  
of familiarity, and whereby  
God is, as it were, inforced to  
cast away his rod, and to alter  
his purpose of punishing.

Great is the force and effca-  
cy of faithfull prayer, and grea-  
ter is the loue of God towards  
vs, in admitting vs so freely  
and boldly to come vnto him  
with

to the Reader.

*with our petitions; nay, so loving he is, that he allureth vs saying, Call vpon mee in the day of trouble, and I will heare thee and deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifieme.*

*Here is sufficient warrant and encouragement for vs to flie vnto God by prayer, in whatsoener trouble, misery, danger or affliction. And the examples of deliuey and helpe in enery kinde are so infinite, as who so is conuersant in the old and new Bookes of God, cannot be ignorant of the force and effect of faithfull Prayer, euen of such as haue beene subiect to like passions as we are: Ioshua prayed, and the Sunne and Moone stood still, Iosh. 10. 12.*

B 5

Elisha

### A Motiue

Elisha prayed, and his enemies were stricken with blindnesse, 2 Kings 6. 18. Eliah prayed, and fire fell from Heanen and destroyed them that came to take him, 2 King. 1. 10.

Faithfull Prayer doth as it were overcome God, in so much as when he hath a purpose to punish a people, or a person, he wil forbid the faithfull to pray for them, lest he should be overcome with their prayer, and so be enforced to spare them, Exod. 32. 10, 11. If the prayer of one faithfull man may restraine God, as it were, from executing his iudgements vpon the wicked, how much more may faithfull prayer preuaile for the good of a faithfull man?

What

to the Reader.

*What should then hinder our Prayer to God in our owne necessities and dangers? Nothing but impatience and unbeliefe, for if in a true and linely faith, and holy intencion, wee present our humble supplications vnto God through Christ, according to his will reuealed in his Word, and wauer not, Christ himselfe assureth vs to obtaine what wee pray for; Whatsoever yee aske (saith he) the Father in my name, hee will giue it you, Iohn 16. 23.*

*Let vs not then be cast downe in our spirits, but let vs lift vp our hearts to him that seeth vs, and taketh care for vs, and hath both will and power to deliuer*

### A Motiue

*liner vs. Hee hath a time in his wisdom to humble vs, and a time in his mercy to helpe vs; a time to debase vs, and a time to relieue vs in despite of Satan and his most malicious instruments; he had his time to afflict Iob, and Ioseph, and Dauid; and in his time againe he deliuered them. Let vs therefore in all our trials, troubles and afflictions call vpon God in the Name of his Sonne, and we shall finde that euen in our holy Meditations he will thinke vpon vs, but before we speake, he will answer vs: and while wee are yet praying, hee will heare vs and helpe vs, and we shall giue glory vnto his name.*

*The faithfull onely haue the  
pro-*

to the Reader.

*promise to bee heard and releued, when they call faithfully, and perseuere constantly, on the true God. What true comfort then or hope can they haue in their prayers, that in stead of calling on the liuing God in Christ, cry vnto, and trust in, false gods? They may cry and knock their breasts, and cut their flesh, and afflict their bodies like Baals Priests, without profit: though they may prosper and preuaile a while to the hardning of their hearts, in the end they shall be confounded and perish at the rebuke of the God of hosts, as were Pharaoh, that great King of Ægypt, that contemned God, Exodus 14. 27, 28. Senacherib that*

A Motiue

that blasphemed God, 2 Kings  
9. 35. Antiochus that wicked  
root, Mac. 1. 11. and all such  
wicked Tyrants, that despising  
the living God, trust in their  
owne strength, and hunt after  
the children of God to shed their  
innocent blood; let them alone,  
their confusion sleepeth not.

The strength of an army is  
faithfull prayer to the God of  
armies; an host of men, muni-  
tion, and militarie furniture,  
are necessaries meanes; but  
without deuout and seruent  
prayer to God, best counsell is  
vaine, and strength feeble:  
But where God is present in  
both, affording a blessing to  
both, there is certaine and true  
victorie.

to the Reader.

We are not indeed to expect  
miraculous deliueries, and to  
neglect the meanes; but where  
ordinary meanes faile (of neces-  
sity) there may wee safely pray  
and expect extraordinary. Our  
owne experience doth approue  
this to be true in two principall  
late deliueries, wherein neither  
the force nor wisdom of man  
can bee said to haue the first  
place; but God alone by his  
owne wisdom found out the  
prevention, and gaue such issue  
to the inferiour execution, as is  
maruellous in the eyes of all men,  
admired euen of our enemies, a-  
gainst whom God himselfe shew-  
ed himselfe an enemy: which  
may teach and encourage vs  
and all posterities to bee confi-  
dent,

### A Motiue

dent, constant and conuersant in  
feruent prayer to him that sa-  
ued vs, and discovered and dis-  
couraged those that rose vp  
both openly and secretly, to haue  
as it were, swallowed vs up  
quite.

And by these our deliueries,  
we may well see and vnderstand  
that if we call vpon him, he can  
worke for our preservation, as  
well without meanes as by  
meanes; yea where ordinary  
meanes faile, he is able to raise  
extraordinary, as hee did in  
parting the waters for his owne  
people to passe, and with the  
same waters drowned their ene-  
mies; for he is the same God he  
was then, and he that saies that  
God neither can nor will worke  
extra-

to the Reader.

extraordinarily at this day, denies him to be God at this day; but as faithfull prayers were anateable in our fore-fathers daies, as when Moses prayed fervently, the Israelites prevailed; and when hee waxed cold, the Amalekites had the better, *Exod. 17. 11.* even so are fervent and faithfull prayers effectual at this day.

We must yet beware, lest while we pray with our tongues, that our hearts and hope bee not set upon carnall meanes; for then will God haue no respect unto our prayers, God will be either the whole or no object of our assurance, he will part his owne glory with none.

He may and doth afford his  
most

### A Motiue

most faithfull children visible  
meanes; and if by them we pre-  
uaile, we may not attribute our  
good successe vnto the meanes,  
but vnto the sword of the Lord,  
not to Gideon: we may not say  
this man did, or without that  
man wee had beene overcome;  
man may doe valiantly, but the  
victory is onely of God who bles-  
seth the meanes; neither are we  
to neglect outward meanes and  
so presume vpon God; it is a  
tempting of him, and argues no  
true confidence in him, neither  
may we contemne the meanes, be  
they neuer so seeming weake, for  
Gods power is seene in weaknes,  
and his wisdom in our igno-  
rance.

Therefore whether our means  
seeme

to the Reader.

seeme likely or unlikely of good  
successe, let them neither lift  
vs up or cast vs downe, neither  
make vs presume or despaire,  
for God can saue as well by few  
as by many, as appeareth by Ge-  
deon, who with three hundred  
men ouercame a huge host of  
the Medianites, Iudg. 7. 13.  
He can supply our occasions as  
well by little as by much: Elijah  
with little food trauelleth forty  
daies and forty nights, 1 King.  
19. 8. Many examples might  
bee produced, but no man con-  
uersant in holy Scripture is ig-  
norant; and therefore our faith  
should not bee the more assured  
through the greatnesse, nor the  
more dismayd at the weaknesse  
of visible meanes, but to depend  
only

A Motiue

onely on the providence of God in prayer, wherein we are to use all reverence, knowing that we are in the presence of an infinite Maieſty.

Our prayers also must be ſincere, without hypocrisie, for hee is a God that ſearcheth the heart, he is iealous, he will not be mocked, nor can he be deceived by outward conformity, for he can finde out a counterfeit; though Izaak could not diſcouer Iacob from Eſau: Ahijah the Prophet, by the Spirit of God could diſcouer diſſemified Iero-boams wife, 1 King. 14. 6. Therefore muſt our prayers proceed from a ſincere, upright, and ſaiſtfull heart, beleeuing that God is willing to heare and able

to the Reader.

to performe what he promisetb:  
otherwise we make him a God  
without mercy, that can and  
will not keare; a God without  
truth that can and will not per-  
forme his promise; or a God va-  
nable to doe it.

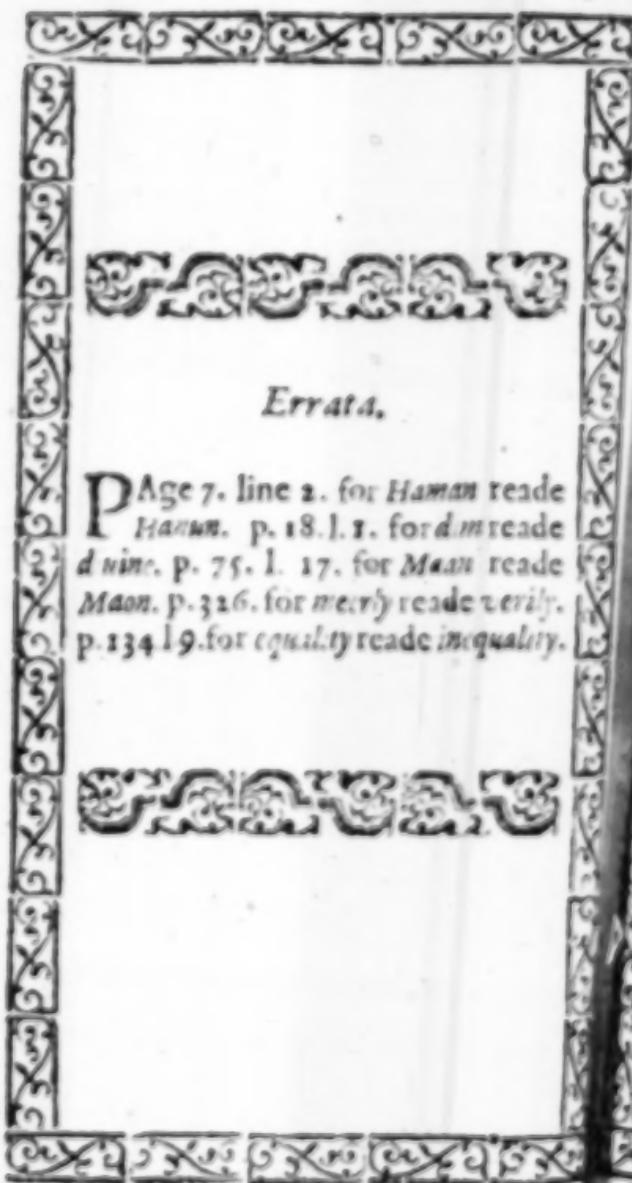
Pray therefore in faith, re-  
uerence, humility, and true de-  
votion, pray with the whole  
heart without wauering or  
doubting, without limiting the  
holy one of Israel, either in the  
time when, the thing what, or  
the manner how hee should doe  
the thing thou desirest; for hee  
knoweth best what, when, and  
how to doe all things for thee:  
therefore as Moses said vnto  
the Israelites, hold you your  
peace, and see the saluation of  
God.

A Motiue, &c.

God. Then pray and be heard,  
aske and receiue: seeke and thou  
shalt finde fauour with God at  
all times, in all places, and upon  
all occasions, enen thy God will  
bee ready to helpe in greatest  
time of need, which God for his  
Christs sake grant, so be it.

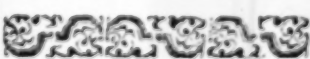
THE

3.  
d,  
on  
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E



*Errata.*

**P**Age 7. line 2. for *Haman* reade  
*Hannu*. p. 18. l. 1. for *d m* reade  
*d nine*. p. 75. l. 17. for *Maan* reade  
*Maon*. p. 316. for *mealy* reade *verily*.  
p. 134 19. for *equality* reade *inequality*.





THE  
IMITATION  
of DAVID his holy  
resolution in all his  
troubles.

---

*A Premeditation touching the  
argument of the 27. Psalm.*

**M**ANY worthy te-  
stimonies the  
holy Scriptures  
doe afford vnto  
vs of holy Da-  
uids godly and constant reso-  
lution,

lution, in bearing his troubles and afflictions; his admirable deliuerances, and his thankfulness to God for the same; whose worthy example may very fitly administer vnto Gods faithfull children, of what estate, calling or condition soeuer, worthy matter of imitation, of his most godly resolution in like dangers, troubles and afflictions, and that without imputation of presumption, though he were a King, whose examples in some cases is not fit for inferiours to imitate. But in matters concerning holy duties to God, there ought to be no difference betweene *Princes* and *people*: for *God is no acceptor*

*A Premeditation.*

3

ceptor of persons, but hee that  
seareth him and worketh right-  
teousnesse (be he high or low,  
rich or poore, King or vassall)  
is accepted of him. And hee  
that commeth neereſt in the  
imitation of the holy life of a  
godly King, hee neereſt re-  
ſembleth the King of Kings,  
who is holy, and would haue  
all men without exception to  
become holy, as hee is holy;  
and to beare all troubles, croſ-  
ſes and afflictions with a god-  
ly reſolution, for his ſake that  
willingly ſuffered infinite mi-  
ſeries and torments for ours:  
and hee that endureth moſt  
with moſt reſolute and godly  
patience, becommeth likeſt  
vnto Chriſt our Redeemer.

C 2

This

This consideration coming into my minde, and feeling the heavy burthen of this worlds miseries, crolles and afflictions of diuers kinds; I could not but for mine owne satisfaction and comfort search the Scriptures, the Register of things of old, written for our learning; where finding, that all our holy fathers, the dearest children of God, in all ages from the beginning, haue suffered and patiently vndergone infinite and grieuous troubles, with most godly and constant resolution, I tooke counsell and courage, to imitate (as farre as by the assistance of the same grace of God, whereby they

*A Premeditation.* 5

they suffered, I might) some worthy preceding patterne of faith and constancy: And among many most worthy, I finde none in generall troubles and dangers, for constant resolution, faithfull prayer and patience, more fit for imitation than godly *David*; whom although hee were a King, and a man chosen after Gods owne heart, yet was hee not without his variety of afflictions, especially enemies, both before hee came to his Kingdome, by *Saul* and his vngodly instruments; and after also, not onely by forraine enemies, as the *Philistines*, the *Amonites*, the *Moabites*, the *Amalakites*, the *Edomites*,  
C; and

6 *A Premeditation.*

and others; but by his owne subiects, nay by them of his own house, as by *Abitophel* his owne priuy Councillor, and *Absolon* his owne son. He was enforced to flie, and to hide himselfe in the Wildernesse in the time of *Saul*, who sought his life; and was discovered vnto *Saul* by faithlesse *Doeg*. He suffered hunger, and was denied to be refreshed by sottish *Nabal*. His wiues were taken prisoners, and with great danger he recovered them. He was like to be stoned of his owne people. He was derided and mocked by *Michol* his owne wife, for praising God in a dance before the Arke. His seruants were

*A Premeditation.* 7

were shamefully intreated by *Haman*, to whom hee sent them, to congratulate him in loue. Hee was forced to flie bare footed from *Abfalon* his sonne. He was railed on, and caustleſſe cursed by wicked *Shemey*, with many other extremities of all kinds; yet fainted hee not, but through faith hee tooke courage and comfort, by his prayers vnto, and dependance on God, who neuer failed him, nor forſooke him, but alwaies and in all his perills deliuered him; and returneth the praise and glory to God.

The example of this most worthy King, among many other godly fore-fathers, doe

8 *A Premeditation.*

witnesse vnto vs, that it is no new thing to see the dearest children of God afflicted in this life, yea most worthy Kings, and that not without the speciall providence and loue of God, who will consecrate his owne through many troubles, which yet deserueth not the glory which shall follow.

*David* in all his troubles was neuer destitute of Gods assistance & inward comfort; for he depended vpon diuine providence in faithfull praier, the strongest armour against enemies, the safest Castle against dangers, and the best assurance to obtaine whatsoever we need. And therefore as

*David*

*A Premeditation.* 9

David beleueed in, and pray-  
ed vnto this powerfull and  
preuailing God, so may all  
Gods afflicted childrē imitate  
his faithfull and godly resolu-  
tion in all their dangers, with  
like patience and hope, and  
they shall be safe, as he plain-  
ly and plentifully testifieth in  
sundry most sweet and com-  
fortable Psalmes, especially in  
this 27. Psalme, wherein be-  
ing in the midst of his  
troubles, he sheweth the force  
of his faith to bee such, as  
though hee were in danger,  
and forsaken of all his friends,  
he was as fully assured to bee  
deliuered in due time, as if he  
had beene euen then out of  
all danger.

C 5

This

This blessed example then of a liuely faith, and the successe thereof laid thus before our eies, cannot but stirre vp in vs, if we haue any faith, a holy desire to imitate him according to the measure of that spirit which guided this godly King, and made him as it were the pen of a most diuine Scribe, whose Scripture hath left vs such heauenly learning, as may teach vs all things, both for this life and that which is to come: and happy is the man that truly followeth his worthy example.

ME.



MEDITATIONS  
and Prayers vpon the  
27. PSALME.

VERSE 1.

The Lord is my light and my  
saluation, whom shall I feare?  
The Lord is the strength of  
my life, of whom shall I bee  
afraid?

**A**ND God hath giuen  
vs outward and  
corpozall eyes to  
see and behold the  
worke of his hands here be-  
low,

12 The Imitation of

low, so hath he giuen vs inward and spirituall light to see himsele, and spirituallly to behold the wonderfull things hee hath done for our soules saluation; therefore when we looke vpon his creatures with our corporall eyes, wee should lift vp the eyes of our mindes to behold him that hath made, framed, and preserved these visible things.

The Sunne is a visible creature, by whose beames our bodily eyes are enlightened, for the eye it selfe giueth not, but receiveth the light which the Sunne giueth, for if of it selfe it gaue the light, wee should apprehend no darknesse

*Dauids resolution.* 13

darknesse at all ; but take a way outward light, and the eye is darke: So the eye of the minde, the eye of the soule cannot of it selfe apprehend that spirituall light, which is Christ, that lighteth euery man that cometh into the world: And without him the minde is darke, and runneth and rusheth vpon diners stumbling blocks of errors and dangers. But he that is guided by that light which was Dauids light, seeth and walketh the way of safety and saluation: in that light (Christ) is the well of life, he is the light in whom all the Elect see the true light and walke in it.

The

14 The Imitation of

The ordinary meanes to apprehend Christ the light, is the word, which he taught and left vnto vs, yet not of it selfe that light, but onely sheweth it, for euery man that heareth the word, seeke not the light comprehended in the same; but they onely whose inward eies the Lord openeth to behold Christ the light, and they walke in the light. Many saw Christ, but not as hee was the light and their saluation; for they delighted in darknes more than light, working wickednesse euen against that light in whom, and by whom, and through whom, they onely that truly seeke that light haue

*David's resolution.* 15

haue assured saluation, neither is there safety or saluation in any other. Therefore doth David ioyne light and saluation together, because that without that light there is no saluation, for light goeth with or before saluation; for without the light of knowledge there can bee no faith, and without faith no saluation. David through faith was bold to affirme that the Lord was his light, and consequently his saluation, and hee that would defend him from all his enemies, and therefore resolueth not to feare what man could doe vnto him.

Our owne naturall light,  
the

16 The limitation of

the light of our eyes is an especial blessing of God: yet for vnrulinesse it may bee compared to the tongue; for as the tongue is an vnruly euill, in setting as it were the whole world on fire, so are the eyes extrauagant, and set the heart on fire; and therefore saith Dauid, Turne away mine eies from regarding vanity: for he found by wofull experience, that the light of the eye doth administer vnto the minde diuers dangerous objects, as to himselfe the nakednesse of Bershaba, with the sight of whom he was so enflamed with the fire of lust, which first entred by the eie, that he committed grie

griuous sinnes in the accomplishment thereof. Yet was Dauid himselfe reputed as it were the light of Israel, which hee assumed not vnto himselfe, but attributed the true light that he had vnto the light of lights; saying, Surely thou art my light O Lord, and the Lord will lighten my darknesse: And againe, the Lord is my light and my saluation.

By his owne naturall light hee could not see his owne error of adultery and marther, vntill hee was inwardly enlightened, then hee could confesse it: neither could he see and consider how the Lord had defended him,  
but

18 The Imitation of

but by that dim light which  
gaue him courage & strength  
against the Feare and the  
Lion, the overcoming of  
whom gaue him assurance  
of the victoꝝ against Goli-  
ah : his experience of Gods  
fauour towards him grew  
daily more and more, encou-  
raging others also to depend  
on the power, providence  
and loue of God by his ex-  
ample, saving, and assuring  
them that the Lord would be  
a sure refuge vnto them in  
their afflictions, soꝝ hee sai-  
leth none that faithfully seeke  
him ; and how can we seeke  
him but by Prayer ? I will  
call vpon the Lord, saith Da-  
uid, who is worthy to be prai-  
sed,

*Dauid's resolution.* 12

sed, so shall I bee safe from  
mine enemies: though they  
haue many meanes to hurt,  
yet God that is our light and  
our saluation, hath many  
more meanes to helpe and to  
defend vs: therefore saith  
Dauid, whom should I feare,  
the Lord is my rocke and my  
fortresse, and hee that deliue-  
reth mee, my God and my  
strength, in him will I trust,  
my shield, the horne also of  
my saluation and my refuge,  
of whom shall I be afraid?  
If I haue lehouah on my  
side, what can man doe vnto  
me? If he be my light, I shall  
live in light and walke in  
light, for in him is no dark-  
nesse at all; he offereth light  
by

20 The Imitation of

by his lively Word, and enlightneth our inward parts by the bright beames of his heauenly Spirit. Being then inwardly armed, howsoever outwardly endangered, we need not feare, but as David did, let vs cast our burthen vpon the Lord and hee shall defend vs; and let vs commend our care vnto him, for he careth for vs: of whom or of what then need we to be afraid?

Saluation cometh not of flesh nor by fleshly meanes, as the true light is not of the world nor of worldly men. Therefore seeke not thy light nor safety through the policy or strength of the flesh, neither

ther dzeame of saluation by  
wozldly meanes, but bzeake  
through the walls of flesh,  
and mount vp in true con-  
templation of that sauing  
light that shineth from a-  
boue; from thence commeth  
the strength against which  
no carnall force shall pre-  
uaile: and beware of such as  
promise vnto themselves  
safetie and saluation without  
this true light, as the wise by  
their policies, the rich by  
their wealth, the mighty by  
their much strength and mul-  
titudes, and as some by their  
owne woꝝkes: All which are  
broken reeds & vaine props,  
and weake meanes to saue  
the outward man, much lesse  
the

The Imitation of  
the inward soule. Now then  
can they say, whom shall I  
feare? of whom shall I bee  
afraid? when indeed they  
cannot but bee afraid euen  
where no feare is.

Could Achitophels coun-  
sell, Nebuchadnezzars great-  
nesse, Pharaohs stoutnesse,  
Goliaths strength, Senache-  
ribs mighty army, Hafaels  
swiftnesse, or the Pharisees  
workes saue them? yet doth  
foolish flesh and bloud ac-  
count this weake and feeble  
meanes their glory, their  
life, and their saluation: But  
as Achitophel, whose coun-  
sell was like the Oracle of  
God, did hang himselfe; as  
Nebuchadnezzar in his great  
test

test pompe became as a beast  
of the field; as Pharaoh in his  
hot pursuit was drowned  
and his army; as Senacherib  
was slaine by his owne sons;  
as Goliath for all his great  
strength was slaine with a  
small stone; as Hazael for all  
his Roe-like swiftnesse, was  
slaine in his running; and as  
the Pharisees, for all their  
workes, were condemned by  
Christ the light: So neither  
the wisest of the world, the  
greatest and most glorious  
in the world, the strongest in  
strength, nor he that inflat-  
eth himselfe most by his best  
workes, worke not onely no  
saluation vnto themselves  
as of themselves, but their  
owne

24 The Imitation of  
owne destruction. But the  
Lord of Hosts is my light,  
my strength and my saluati-  
on, therefore will I not be  
afraid.

Consider well the benefit  
of thy light in the Lord, em-  
brace the Lord thy light and  
thy saluation, embrace him  
in his Word, for God is the  
Word, the Word that light,  
that light thy life and thy sal-  
uation.

Here then is the light that  
guideth the blinde, and hap-  
py is the soule that hath this  
glorious light, he need not  
feare the secret practises of  
the wicked, which this light  
disconereth, ne; the force  
of the mighty, which this  
strength

*Dauids resolution.* 25

Strength withstandeth, for  
God is his salvation.

Feare not man then, who  
killeth but the body, feare  
not the fire that consumeth  
but the body, feare not the  
sea that drowneth but the  
body, feare not sicknesse that  
toucheth but the body, feare  
not the sword that pierceth  
but the body; feare nothing  
that can preuaile but against  
the body, for the Lord is thy  
light and thy salvation.

O feare this Lord and re-  
uerence this light; he saith in  
darknesse, feare him that can  
kill both body and soule, and  
can cast both into vtter dark-  
nesse; feare this great God,  
feare none but him that can

D

save

saue and kill, that can cast  
downe and exalt, that can  
with his Word worke what  
he will, when he will, and as  
he will; feare him in loue,  
and loue him in feare, call  
vpon him, despaire not in  
him, he is thy saluation.

Feare not the world nor  
worldly things, feare onely  
sinne in the world, and flee  
from euill, which this true  
light hateth; then feare not  
man, for if a thousand assaile  
thee, feare not, but pray and  
beloue, and trust in the Lord  
thy saluation: he will open  
the eyes of thy faith and thou  
shalt see with Elisha millions  
of meanes to defend thee; if  
poverty or want oppress  
thee

thée as it did sometimes Dauid, feare not, he will relæue thée, for hée preserueth with little as with much, hée fed many thousands with little meanes, and when they were all well filled, there was taken vp in the remainder more then was befoze they had eaten. He increased the Oyle and Meale of the poore Widow, that she fed her selfe and hers, and paid her debts with the remainder. He brought water out of the stones, and out of the dry Iaw-bone of an Ass. He fed his children with Bread from Heauen, and sent them Quailles in the hungry Wilderness. He sent abundance

of wheat extraordinarily brought to distressed Samaria This is he, even that great God, that is the sustainer of my life, my light and my salvation: and not mine alone, but the God of all that faithfully seek him in their distresse.

Should I then feare, though I be environed with enemies: though I were in distresse: nay, should I feare though I were in penury and want: though I were imprisoned for the constant profession of Christs truth: did he not breake the fetters, and opened he not the very iron gates, and cast the watchmen in a slumber to fetch Peter out of prison: did he not  
giue

gine Ioseph and Paul saour  
with their Jailors : of whom  
or of what then may the  
faithfull bee afraid : what  
crosses, what troubles, what  
afflictions, what threats of  
tyrants can make Gods chil-  
dren afraid : though the seas  
rage and roze, though the  
world be in confused combu-  
stion, though the mountains  
cleave in sunder, though the  
heauens melt, though he that  
made all consume all, I will  
not feare. The Lord high  
& mighty, he is the strength  
of my life ; nay, he is to mee  
life it selfe, who then or what  
can without him force my  
death : If he take away this  
life, he hath prouided for me

30 The Imitation of  
a better and permanent:  
whom or what shall I be a-  
fraid of then? Shall I be a-  
fraid of Hell or Satan? But  
my Lord in Christ, my light  
and my salvation, hath con-  
quered both Satan and Hell,  
what need I feare?

*A Prayer that God will be our  
light and our salvation in all  
our troubles and dangers.*

**O** Lord, who art the  
light that neuer go-  
eth out, whereby  
thou guidest and  
gouernest those that acknow-  
ledge their owne darknesse;  
thou

*Dauids resolution.* 31

thou art the strength that neuer groweth weake, whereby thou sauest & defendest thine from the hands of all that hate them. Bee thou my light, O Lord, and lighten my darknesse, that I may walke in that light and neuer goe astray, for there is no agreement betweene error and thy truth; giue mee therefore heauenly knowledge, and I shall not be ignorant of that which I ought to know; and assist me with thy diuine grace, and I shall practise that which thou hast taught me to know: Be thou my strength, then whom need I to feare? stand thou on my side, and then of whom should I be afraid?

D 4

Stretch

32 The Imitation of

Stretch forth thy hand and hold me vp, thou hast a mighty arme, and strong is thy right hand: in thee therefore I trust, and will not feare what man can doe vnto me.

Be not farre from mee, O my God, for thou seest my troubles and knowest my dangers; neglect me not, but hasten to helpe me, giue care vnto me and saue me, and let not mine enemies haue their desires against mee, nor triumph ouer me: though they be many, and in shew far too mighty for me, yet in comparison of thy strength they are weake and of no strength; they trust in their Chariots, munition and multitudes;  
but

*Dauids resolution.* 33

but I trust in thee and in thy strength alone, only praying thee to blesse vnto me the ordinary and lawfull meanes which it shall please thee to raise vp in thy wisdom for my defence. Though I doe know and doe acknowledge, that as a horse of it selfe is a vaine helpe to deliuer his rider by his great strength or swiftnesse, so are all outward, visible and carnall meanes vnable to defend mee without thee; and vnlesse thou blesse the vse of them, and dispose and manage them in thy wisdom for my defence, they are also vaine.

Therefore come I vnto thee my God, my strength, my

D 5

light

34 The Imitation of  
light and my saluation, who  
hast promised, and art able to  
send euen from Heauen to  
saue me.

Thou canst command an  
host of Angels to campe a-  
bout mee; though enuironed  
with many and mighty ad-  
uersaries, yet hauing thee on  
my side, I know there shall be  
more with mee than with  
them; while I am vnder thy  
protecting wings I am safe, I  
will not feare.

Giue thine Angels charge  
of me therefore, O Lord, to  
keepe & defend me: shew thy  
power in my weaknesse, and  
the weaknes of mine enemies  
by thy strength: then though  
an host pitch against me, my  
heart

*Dauids resolution.* 35

heart shall not bee afraid;  
though war be raised against  
me, I will trust in thee, my  
Lord, my light, my strength,  
and my saluation.

VERSE 2. and 3.

2. When the wicked, euen  
mine enemies and my foes,  
came vpon mee to eat vp  
my flesh, they stumbled and  
fell. 3. If an host pitched  
against me, my heart should  
not be afraid; though warre  
be raised against me, I will  
trust in thee.

**I**n all actions Experience  
is as the mother of know-  
ledge, and knowledge the  
ground

ground of Assurance, which made David strong in his resolution to encounter Goliath, having formerly found that God assisted him in two severall dangers, the one in killing a Beare, the other in overcoming a Lion; two strong, fierce, and devouring beasts, and that when he was but young and a Shepherd; yet it seemeth he had learned to feare God and to trust in him, for that he acknowledged that he overcame them, not by his owne proper power, but by the power of God; which two conquests wrought in him assurance, that by the same aid hee should vanquish that monster

Host of men Goliath: though  
his ugly presence and furni-  
ture of armes amazed the  
whole host of Israel, David  
yet not daunted, hauing a  
strong faith in God, under-  
tooke the combat and preuaile-  
led, though that monster  
scorned him, and threatning  
that hee would giue his flesh  
to be deuoured of the Fowles  
of the aire, and wilde beasts of  
the field, which by the aid of  
him in whom David trusted,  
came contrarily to passe, for  
David tooke off his head and  
disarmed him, and left his  
carkasse to the Fowles of the  
aire, whereby he more and  
more increased in faith,  
strength and courage, and  
bold

38 The Imitation of

beld to assure himselfe, that as this monster stumbled and fell at his flying stone that would haue eaten vp his flesh; so should all his wicked enemies and foes when they should come vpon him to eat vp his flesh, namely, to take away his life, they should euen so stumble and fall, as by experience he after found that God still defended him, so that to the praise of God hee sung, When the wicked, euen mine enemies and my foes, came vpon me to eat vp my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

When Saul a mighty King sought Dauids life to destroy it, first by his owne hand with

*Dauids resolution.* 39

with a speare, purposing to have nailed him to the wall suddenly (which by Gods prouidence he auoided) and after commanded Jonathan his sonne, and other his seruants to murder him: but God stirred vp the heart of Jonathan to affect Dauid so entirely, that he revealed vnto him his fathers malicious intention against the life of Dauid, shewing thereby the wonderfull prouidence of God in preserving his from most imminent dangers.

Dauid not yet secure, for feare fled from Saul, as not willing to tempt God by presuming vpon Gods deliue-ry, and not to vse lawfull meanes

The Imitation of  
meanes to provide for him-  
selfe; hid himselfe in the  
Mountaines where Saul his  
enemy with a great power  
pursued him, suborning intel-  
ligencers to discover Davids  
abode wheresoever hee hid  
himselfe: where may be no-  
ted the heat of the malice of  
an enemy, and how ready  
some wicked wretches are to  
shew themselves officious to  
betray the innocent, to please  
a Tyrant.

But note further the pro-  
vidence of God, in finding  
secret & vnerpected meanes  
to preserve the innocent, for  
when Saul was in his most  
furious pursuit to kill Da-  
uid, his abode being discove-  
red,

red, God found a meanes to put a King in Sauls nose (in fauour of Dauid, and for his owne glozv) inforcing him to retire from further following that innocent man; and to hasten the rescue and relæse of his owne Territories which the Philistines had zuen then by Gods prouidence invaded: and being soze beset with his enemies, he desperately fell on his own sword and died. So it came to passe, that when the wicked, euen Dauids enemies and his soes, came vpon him to eat vp his flesh, namely to take away his life, they stumbled and fell.

God was euer with Dauid;

42: The Imitation of  
uid; for David alwaies de-  
pended on God, which who  
so doth, shall neuer stumble  
nor fall. But euen his faith  
and integritie shall make his  
very enemies to feare him:  
As Saul feared David, be-  
cause God was with him,  
whose chiefe armour and  
weapons were his feare and  
trust, in the name and assi-  
stance of Iehouah, where-  
with he fought diuers bat-  
tels, and slew with great  
slaughter many Philistines  
his enemies; not onely be-  
foze, but after he was anoin-  
ted King, none preuailed a-  
gainst him, but they that  
came vpon him stumbled and  
fell.

Seeing

Seeing then that Faith,  
and the feare of God and  
praier be approued of force,  
so far to preuaile with God,  
as to obtaine his helpe and  
defence against wicked ene-  
mies & foes, that when they  
assaile vs, he causeth them to  
stumble and fall ; let vs  
imitate the faith, and fight  
with that assurance that Da-  
uid did : for he is the same  
God still, of the same power,  
of the same prouidence and  
loue. And we are not without  
like enemies as Dauid in his  
time had, though without  
cause.

To relate all Dauids dan-  
gers, troubles, and delinea-  
ries, battels and victories,  
though

though profitable for our encouragement: yet might seeme tedious, not altogether impertinent, because by them is the loue, the power, and prouidence of God seeme in defending and relieuing the faithfull; and his iust iudgements against wicked enemies of their stumbling and fals. Yet let his faith and constancy moue all faithfull men to imitate his vertues; not in that he was a King, but in that hee was a godly King, of whom God giues testimonie, that hee was a man according to Gods owne heart; not that he was so consozmable by nature, but so framed by the grace  
and

*Dauids resolution.* 45

and good will of God: For,  
by nature he was no better  
in Gods acceptance than  
Saul, who was also a King:  
But God so seasoned Dauids  
heart (of his owne free mer-  
cy) that he obeyed and con-  
formed his actions, according  
as God had wrought in his  
heart, and left Saul to the cor-  
ruption of his owne heart:  
yet did not David glory in a-  
ny merit of his owne, but  
gave the praise to God, say-  
ing, Blessed is he whom thou  
choosest and causest to come  
vnto thee. And againe, The  
wicked are strangers from the  
wombe, even from the belly  
haue they erred: Yet Saul af-  
ter he was anointed King by  
Samuel,

46 The Imitation of  
Samuel, was turned into an  
other man, and was num-  
bred among the Prophets;  
but no otherwise than Judas  
among the Apostles.

God is the God of all that  
faithfully and constantly fly  
vnto him for succour; For,  
saluation belongeth vnto him  
alone; not vnto the power of  
Kings, bee they neuer so  
strong in multitudes of ar-  
med men, with shipping, or  
whatsoever military and  
warlike furniture; but  
where Gods continuall bles-  
sing doth accompany a few,  
they preuaile against many;  
though sometimes God may  
suffer his owne dearest chil-  
dren to bee encountred and  
beaten

*Dauids resolution.* 47

beaten by his owne and their  
enemies : Especially when  
they presume to stand too  
much vpon their owne  
strength, as vpon allies,  
friends, and multitudes: pre-  
uailing with these, God is  
not so glorified, as when he  
by few overcommieth a mul-  
titude : As when Dauid by a  
few slew two and twentie  
thousand Aramites : And  
Ioshua five combined kings,  
wherein yet he would not  
haue the whole victorie to be  
ascribed to Ioshuahs forces,  
but was himselfe the princi-  
pall in the ouerthrow, not  
onely in aiding and directing  
Ioshuah, but in powering  
downe harte-stones from hea-  
uen

48 The Imitation of

nen vpon his enemies, whereby he slew moze men than Ioshuahs Army did by the sword. And sometimes he taketh to himselfe the whole praise of the victorie; as when Senacherib came against good Hezekiah, with a most invincible supposed Army, vnder the conduct of Tartan Rabfaris, and Rabfakch, railing vpon, and threatening Hezekiah, and blaspheming God, styling himselfe the Great King of Ashur, whom he thought God himselfe was not able to withstand, flattering himselfe as proud Tyrants use to doe (as we haue seene) that he in despite of Hezekiahs God, would

*Dauids resolution.* 49

would depriue him of his  
Kingdome; pretending that  
he came in the name of the  
Lord (as some of late haue  
done) Are wee come (saith  
he) or doe wee this without  
the Lord? Whereat Hezekiah,  
indeed, according to humane  
frailtie was afraid: But as-  
king counsell of the Lord by  
faithfull prayer (the best re-  
fuge and defence in danger)  
he became assured of Gods  
assistance and banisht feare.  
And that night, that God  
(which that Tyrant blasphe-  
med, as not of power to re-  
sist him) sent his destroying  
Angell and slew Senacheribs  
army, one hundred foure  
score and five thousand men.

¶

¶

We may not forget our like  
delineries fresh in our me-  
mories, euen by the more  
hand of God.

It is not superfluous to  
recount other famous Histo-  
ries, recorded in the Booke  
of God, which for further  
confirmation of our Faith in  
God, in like danger are plen-  
tifull. Benadab, that mightie  
King of Aram, threatned  
Ahab King of Israel to de-  
prive him, not onely of his  
Kingdome, but of all that  
he had, of his Siluer and  
Gold, of his Women and  
faire children: shewing here  
by the insolency, pride, and  
securitie of Tyrants, who  
by reason of their carnall  
Strength,

*Dauid's resolution.* 51

Strength, force and multitudes, will dispose of the lands, and share the possessions of them, whose Territories they thirst after, and that before their arrivall, as though the victory were theirs before the encounter. As we with our eares have heard that our enemies have boasted, through the false and forged benediction of him that is a Deceiuer, and yet taketh the falsly conceived authoritie from heauen. But our God laughed their pride, insolency, and security to scorn, taking our cause into his owne hand, confounded their devices, daunted their hearts, weakned their

C 2      armes.

armes, abandoned their families by his owne power; even as he gaue proud Benadab into Ahabs power, though a wicked King and an Idolater, therefore not for Ahabs sake; but for his owne Names sake, and his owne peoples safety. And to shew his Omnipotent power in defending his owne, and confounding his and their enemies. So that the truly faithful in God being threatened, beset and besieged by wicked multitudes, need not to be afraid: for though war be raised against them; that God that defended David, Hezekias, and all that haue truly called vpon him in the danger,

Dauid's resolution. 53

danger, will as he hath  
euer hitherunto, defend vs.

They that haue the God  
of Hosts on their side, need  
not to feare though Kings  
combine, and people rage, as  
if they would eat vp their  
flesh. Onely let them liue  
godly, pray faithfully; and  
vse ordinary meanes latoful-  
ly: then if an Host pitch a-  
gainst them, their hearts need  
not be afraid though warre  
be raised against them, let  
their trust in him, and they  
shall see the saluation of God.

They that fight against  
Gods people, fight euen a-  
gainst God himselfe: as Paul  
persecuting his children, per-  
secuted Christ. If therefore

a mighty Host invade vs,  
we may boldly, though in  
seeming weaknesse, encounter  
them; for there are more  
with the children of God,  
though not saine, than with  
the wicked. God neuer fail-  
leth nor forsaketh his, vnlesse  
they forsake him: he leaueth  
them not, vnlesse they leaue  
him.

Infinite are the examples  
hereof in holy Scriptures,  
which might be also produ-  
ced, further to confirme our  
assurance: And were it need-  
full, there might be inserted  
not a few examples of Gods  
like deliueries, recorded in  
our owne Chronicles, and in  
our own remembrances. But  
where

where Gods Spirit speaketh  
by the pens of Gods owne  
Secretaries, there need no  
humane testimonies, but  
onely to shew that God is  
still the same. He is Alpha  
and Omega, the same, yester-  
day, to day, and for ever;  
therefore may the man that  
is godly, assure himselfe with  
holy David: If an Host of  
enemies pitch against him, his  
heart need not bee afraid,  
though war be raised against  
him he may trust in this; That  
when the wicked, even his  
enemies and his foes come  
vpon him to eat vp his flesh,  
they shall stumble and fall.

—————

*A Prayer to God, that he will  
defend vs from our enemies.*

**O** Holy and most mightie  
God of Hosts, who  
dwellest in the heaueyns, and  
yet art thou absolute also in  
the earth, gouerning, gui-  
ding, directing, and prote-  
cting, those that feare thy  
name, so that they need not  
feare the power or malice of  
whatsoever aduersaries; for  
saluation belongeth vnto thee  
alone, and thy blessing is  
euermore vpon them, that  
faithfully depend vpon thee:  
Therefore (Lord) though we  
be weake in power, ignorant  
in

*Dauids resolution.* 57

in carnall policies, destitute of humane aid, and beset with enemies, who raise deadly warre against vs, confirme our faith in thee, and we shall be strong; yea, stronger than our enemies, and wiser than our most politicke and subtile aduersaries, and shall be either able to withstand their violence, or escape their mischiefs: though we haue no other defence but thy providence, no other armour but thy loue; no other weapons but true faith, and a holy feare of thy name; yet in this defence will we trust, and in this saluation will we reioyce.

In this confidence, Lord, come we vnto thee, powring

E 5 out

The Imitation of  
 out our hearts before thee; not  
 because thou knowest them  
 not, but because thou knowest  
 them; therefore come we vn-  
 to thee, that thou maist bee  
 pleased to remoue our feare,  
 and ease our grieſe; and to be  
 ſtrengthened and confirmed  
 in a liuely aſſurance of our  
 ſaſetie and ſaluation in thee,  
 and of thy defence againſt  
 theſe our enemies, for there is  
 none beſides thee that can  
 deliuer vs.

Remember Lord thy good-  
 neſſe, which thou vouchſa-  
 fedſt to our faithfull fore-ſa-  
 thers of old, how thou deliue-  
 redſt them from their ene-  
 mies when they cried vnto  
 thee. Heare vs we pray thee,  
 O

*Dauids resolution.* 59

O Lord, and helpe vs, for  
vaine is the helpe of man.

Turne our feare into assu-  
rance of thy fauour and helpe;  
our mourning into reioycing  
in thee. Looke our sorrowes,  
and gird vs againe with glad-  
nesse: let not our sinnes hin-  
der thy mercies, wherein wee  
pray thee to turne the counsell  
of our wicked aduersaries in-  
to foolishnesse, their strength  
into weaknesse, and their hope  
into despaire.

Thou art the Lord of hosts,  
high and mightie, louing vn-  
to those that feare thee, help-  
full vnto those that trust in  
thee, and a terrible God vnto  
them that despise thee or  
thine; What Tyrant can stand  
before

60 The Imitation of

before thee? What King can encounter thee, or take thy children out of thy hands? *Pharaoh* could not detain *Israel*, when thou wouldest transplant them: *Saul* could not hurt *David*, thou defending him. *Senacherib* could not haue his desire against *Hezekias*, thou fighting for him; our enemies could not hurt vs, thou curbing them. O shew thy selfe now as thou hast euer done, our defender.

With speed, O' Lord, reforme all our imperfections, couer the multitude of our grosse and fearefull sins, which call for enemies, and other punishments in thy iustice to  
be

*Dauids resolution.* 61

be inflicted vpon vs : Turne  
thou vnto vs, and we shall re-  
turne vnto thee : Let our re-  
pentance appeare by the mor-  
tification of our sinfull de-  
sires: Humble vs, and we shall  
be humbled, then shalt thou  
in compassion pardon vs, and  
in thy fauour compasse vs a-  
bout, as with a shield : Thou  
shalt bee our refuge in our  
greatest danger ; for there is  
no God besides thee, no help  
but of thee : Thou alone art  
able to command an Hoste of  
Angels from heauen, to at-  
tend and guard vs : Twentie  
thousand thousand Angels  
canst thou send from heauen  
to defend vs, thy selfe the  
chiefe Leader of that celestiall  
army :

62 The Imitation of

army: whereof one of them is sufficient to confound a million of thine and our wicked enemies when they assaile vs to eat vp our flesh; thou in a moment canst make them to stumble and fall.

What then is man? Or what is the force of Princes, when thou takest part against them in the behalfe of them whom thou wilt defend? Therefore cast we our burden and care vpon thee, for thou hast promised to care for vs.

O send therefore from heauen and saue vs; haue mercy vpon vs, O God, haue mercy vpon vs, for we trust in thee: And vnder the shadow of thy wings will wee shelter our selues,

*Dauids resolution.* 63

selues, vntill our enemies bee  
either conuerted or confound-  
ded. Then shall we praise thy  
name, O Lord, for that thou  
hast not left vs as a prey vnto  
the will of our enemies: and  
though we walke in the midst  
of troubles, yet we know and  
are assured that thou wilt take  
a conuenient time to finish  
the worke of our absolute de-  
liuery: For thy mercy, and  
thy truth, and thy power, en-  
dure from generation to gene-  
ration. Preserue vs therefore,  
O God, from these cruell men,  
and the praise and glory shall  
bee thine, the comfort ours.  
And the example of thy so  
fatherly protecting vs, shall  
be a motiue to others in like  
danger

64 The Imitation of  
danger to call vpon thee. So  
be it.

VERSE 4.

One thing haue I desired of  
the Lord that I will re-  
quire, euen that I may  
dwell in the house of the  
Lord all the daies of my  
life, to behold the beauty  
of the Lord, and to visit  
his temple.

**G**reat is the disfe-  
rence betwene  
the worldling &  
the true Christi-  
an; betwene a  
carnall and a spirituall min-  
ded

ded man: The one coueteth  
to dwell and to haue his con-  
tinuall abode here below, the  
other soareth and aspireth  
vpward: the one resembleth  
the Swine, the other the Ea-  
gle: the one is neuer satisfi-  
ed with earthly and carnall  
things, for he hath as many  
desires as he hath senses, and  
euery pleasing thing that of-  
fereth it selfe to any of them  
he coueteth, for euery sense  
hath its particular delights:  
as many senses so many fan-  
tasies numberlesse, yet nei-  
ther of them can be satisfied,  
for the heart of a carnal man  
ingrosseth them all, and the  
more vanities it apprehen-  
deth, the more desire increa-  
seth.

66 The Imitation of

seth; for, the eye is neuer satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing pleasing things. But the spirituall minded desireth onely one thing, namely, to be assured of his saluation and the glory to come. And therefore holpy Dauid desired (as all true Christians ought) this one thing, for this only one thing is necessary.

Bershaba the wife of Dauid, and mother of Salomon, desired but one thing of her sonne, and hee promised her faire, but performed it not according to her desire. But Dauid the father of Salomon, desired one thing which hee longed for, of a King greater than

than Salomon, and a matter of far greater moment than was Bershabaes, and his Petition was accepted: both their Petitions seemed to proceed of loue, but the difference of their issues was great; the one procured hatred and death, the other a most blessed successe. Shee made her request to man, in whom to put confidence is vaine. He made his request to God, the holy one of Israel, in whom there is mercy and truth. To whom also Salomon made one especiall request, only for wisdom, and obtained it, and with it many earthly blessings which he asked not. So bountifull  
is

68 The Imitation of  
is God, as if we aske that  
one thing necessary, namely  
the Kingdome of God and  
the righteousnesse thereof,  
he will also adde blessing up-  
on blessing, though we aske  
them not.

Dauids only Petition was,  
y he might dwell in the house  
of the Lord all the daies of his  
life: A blessed (yet a strange)  
request of a King in the opi-  
nion of worldly men, who  
might thinke David not to be  
so wise as some ambitious  
and carnall politicians are  
at this day, who had rather  
be in Kings Courts to take  
their pleasures, than to be  
restrained in a Temple for a  
day. And David being a  
King

*Dauids resolution.* 69

King, might haue retired  
himselfe in his Palace, and  
haue taken what pleasure  
and delight hee would; ha-  
uing a Kingdome to supply  
whatsoever might haue plea-  
sed any of his senses. But  
these delights hee found not  
answerable to his affection,  
which was seasoned from  
aboue, hauing tasted so  
sweetly of the loue of Icho-  
uah, who of a Shepherd made  
him a King, and who had so  
often deliuered him from his  
enemies; he had rather bee  
conuersant with him in his  
house one day, than a thou-  
sand in the Court of Saul,  
or in his owne Court among  
his Gallants. Nay, he would  
chose

70 The Imitation of  
chose rather to be a dweller  
per in the house of God, than  
to command an earthly king-  
dome, and to be depriued of  
his heavenly exercises in the  
house of God.

It is a most glorious estate  
indeed to be a King, but farre  
more glorious to be a godly  
King. He is Gods Vice-ge-  
rent in that part of the earth  
wherein God in his proui-  
dence hath set him; yet must  
he looke to haue some discor-  
dants mixt with his great-  
nesse, and necessary too; o-  
therwise greatnesse might  
cause forgetfulness, that he is  
a man, as former examples  
haue discovered. And there-  
fore did God visit David  
(chosen

(chosen after his own heart)  
with many troubles, to the  
end he should not be unminde-  
full what he was, & whence,  
and from what estate God  
had raised him to that place  
of eminence: and that he  
should serue the Lord, and  
maintaine his lawes, and  
defend his people, cherishing  
the good, and chastising the  
euill. And therefore was  
Dauid so forward in calling  
his people to serue the Lord,  
and himselfe to be the leader  
of them to the Temple of  
God, to which he had so sin-  
cere a desire, that he reque-  
sted of the Lord that he  
might dwell therein all the  
daies of his life, as at least  
haue

71 The Imitation of  
haue free liberty often to vi-  
sit it, to the praise of God  
and exercise of prayer.

This desire is commonly  
the last and least in great  
men, for the most part though  
no doubt they desire (as Ba-  
lazzar did) to die (when neces-  
sity requireth) the death of  
the righteous, and greater  
glory would it be unto them  
if they would practice (while  
they haue time) the life of the  
righteous as they seldome  
doe; yet few or none, of  
whatsoever quality are so  
irreligious in thew, but they  
will looke into the house of  
God, peradventure once, it  
may be twice in a Sabbath.  
And peradventure thinke it  
long

*Dauids resolution.* .73

long, as loth to spare their pleasures, delights or profits to liue a whole day in the Temple of God with fasting and prayer. Some would thinke it as hard a taske as the bondage of Egypt, or the captivity of Babylon. But blessed bee God, some there are that haue Dauids desire, though not to dwell really in the Temple, yet to bee comfortably conuersant among Gods people, in hearing God speake vnto them, and they to speake vnto God.

This is that that great men should principally desire for their example in well doing much moueth inferi-  
f ours

ours to imitation, for it is commonly obserued, that example both draw more to good or euill, than documents or deuotions. The godly life of a great man is as a Tower seene a far, and many especially his followers will imitate his steps, at least in shew, and even that shew of a godly life is a good motiue to others to liue godly indeed: and as a good life giues comfort & encouragement to others to be good, so the president of euill makes many euill. If greatnesse and goodnes goe together, it is the sweetest comfort y<sup>e</sup> a mortall man can make in this life, & the contrary as harsh & helles.

This

This holy desire of Dauid was not for a day, for hee speaks of the time past. I desired, which implies a continuall inward Petition; and argues his constancy in desiring, though he were often in such straits and distresses as he could not visit the materiall temple as he desired; yet, wheresoeuer he was driven by the malice and rage of his enemies, he euen there found Bethel, the house of God; in the Wildernesse of Ziph, in the holds of Engedy, in Maan and Gath, vncooth and solitary places: hee found the Lord his God euen in his holy Temple, for where God is present there

76 The Imitation of  
is his Temple. In the Lions  
den Daniel found him ; in the  
Furnace the three children ;  
in the Dungeon Jeremy ; in  
the Prison Peter ; vnder the  
stones Stephen ; in Sodom  
Lot ; in the floud Noah : God  
is euery where, where he is  
called vpon faithfully.

Euery faithful childe of  
God is alwaies in Gods  
house, where David desired  
so earnestly to dwell : yet  
though he found God euery  
where where he called vpon  
him, he had an earnest desire  
to be conuersant, even in  
that materiall temple where  
the children of God did as-  
semble, to celebrate the pra-  
ises of God, and to heare his

Worsh:

Word: and though he were  
their King, thought it no  
disparagement, but the grea-  
test part of his duty to ac-  
company his subiects (accoz-  
ding to conueniencie) in the  
holy exercises of Religion:  
whereof being prevented by  
meanes of his enemies, hee  
complaineth that hee was as  
a Pelican in the Wildernetse,  
and as an Owle in the Desert:  
And deemed the Sparrow  
more happy than he, because  
that silly Bird could at all  
times resort vnto that holy  
place to which he could not  
come.

Lord (saith Dauid) who  
shall dwell in thy Tabernacle?  
and who shall rest in thy holy

F 3 Moun-

Mountaine? that is, who shall worthily enter into thy holy Temple and behold thy beauty: he answereth, Hee that worketh righteousness, &c. for God is holy and requireth holinesse of life, walking vprightly in a lively faith. And therefore though it be the duty of all men to frequent the materiall Temple of God, to accompany the congregation in prayer, praising of God and hearing his Word: yet all come not with that holy desire that David did, nor qualified as David was: yet hee that is vnprepared to day may be fit to morrow, for the Word of God is as a flet, and of  
ten

ten times catcheth men ere  
they bee aware: therefore  
ought all men to desire as  
Dauid did, to visit Gods  
Temple, where this Act of  
the Word is spread; for being  
once taken, hee will then  
with Dauid require that one  
thing: namely, to dwell in  
the house of the Lord all the  
daies of his life, and often to  
visit his Temple.

Dauid did not onely make  
a bare request vnto God, but  
did euen paele him, hee re-  
quired him as if he had been  
familiar with him, (as the  
faithfull may vse a holy fa-  
miliarity with God in their  
prayers) praying God to af-  
ford him that blessing of bles-

80 The Imitation of

sings, as to admit him into his holy presence, wherein is the fulnesse of ioy, and at his right hand are pleasures for euermore; not so; a day a moneth or a yere, as worldlings haue, and then perish, but begun here and shall neuer haue end.

To dwell in the house of Iehouah, is to dwell & abide in his fauour, to be partaker of his sanctifying grace, to haue the true knowledge of his diuine will, and to practice it by faith, obedience, zeale, prayer; and to beare about vs the markes of the Lord Iesus, in patient vndergoing the burthen of the Crosse, and in continuall exercise

ercise of holinesse and righte-  
ousnesse : whosoener is in  
this case is safe in the ho-  
ly Temple of God as in a  
safe Sanctuary, and is a  
true member of the mysti-  
call body of our conquering  
Christ, the head of that  
Church which is the true  
Temple, neither made with  
hands, and which hands can-  
not pull downe : Out of  
which are barred all such as  
trust in lying miracles, and  
workes that cannot profit  
such as Keale, commit idola-  
try, adultery, such as sweare  
falsly, and such as fall downe  
and worship false gods, or  
the true God after a false  
and idolatrous manner.

*F 5* Though

82 The Imitation of

Though these stand in the  
materiall Temple, or seclude  
themselves in Cloisters, in  
seeming deuotion to seque-  
ster themselves from the  
world to God, and yet com-  
mit many barbarous sinnes  
and grosse impieties, think-  
ing themselves safe, and to  
be reconciled to God by a  
confessor's penance, God will  
not onely not heare them but  
reiect them & their prayers,  
for they seeme religious and  
are not, obedient to God and  
are not, faithfull and are  
not: but are more Hypo-  
crites, who resorting to the  
Temple of God, commit ra-  
ther sacrilege than offer sa-  
crifice acceptable to God.

These

These visit not the Temple,  
but rather defile it with their  
counterfeit holinesse, who  
would seme in thew Saints,  
but in heart enemies to  
Christ and Christians; yet  
cry they, the Church, the  
Church; and yet farre from  
being members of it. So  
many seeming-good Christi-  
ans cry out, Preach, Preach,  
and seme neuer satisfied  
with sermons; this desire  
is good, if their hearts desire  
it to profit and practise the  
word: but if it be but to seme  
religious, and inwardly re-  
taine their corrupt desires,  
if they amend not their  
waies and their woorkes,  
sme they neuer so holy they  
are

84 The Imitation of  
are but Hypocrites: for this  
is to be in the Temple of  
God by his Word preached,  
to learne & to execute iudge-  
ment, not to oppresse the  
poore nor the stranger, the  
fatherlesse nor the Widow,  
not to deceiue nor to walke  
after other gods, after riches  
and pleasures. If this fruit of  
hearing appeare in them,  
they are no doubt of the fa-  
mily and house of God, and  
shall dwell in his Tabernacle  
and rest securely vpon his  
holy Mountaine, for they are  
of the generation of the iust:  
but there is a generation  
(saith Salomon) that are  
pure in their owne conceits,  
and yet are not washed from  
their

*Dauids resolution.* 84

their filchinesse : they follow  
the deuices of their owne  
hearts, And assume vnto  
themselves a peculiar man-  
ner of seruing of God, not ac-  
cording to the sincere truth :  
but as God abhorreth all sa-  
crifices of vncleane things :  
so doth hee all counterseit  
shewes of sincerity.

God admitteth not sin-  
ners ; namely, such as make  
no conscience of sinne, to  
come into his holy presence,  
much lesse to dwell in his ho-  
ly Temple, though they may  
saie to honour him with  
their lips : He detesteth their  
forged sacrifices, and their  
very prayers are abhomin-  
able, though they partake of  
the

86 The limitation of

the holy Sacraments, and  
performe outwardly other  
diuine duties: He is not  
pleased with them, neither  
behold they the beauty of the  
Lord; but his seuerer and  
fierce countenance is bent a-  
gainst them.

But such as desire with  
the like affection as David  
did, to behold the beautie of  
the Lord, and to visit his  
Temple, are such as the  
Lord enuiceth and willet to  
come, and lovingly embra-  
ceth them. They come not  
for a spert and away, but de-  
sire to make their continuall  
abode, where they may still  
behold his beautie and his  
glory; his louing kindnesse  
and

*Dauid's resolution.* 87

and mercies towards them, shewed in his word as in a glasse, which appeareth more sweet and amiable to the eies of their sanctified soules, than the most beautifull feature of Angels. This most heauenly beauty Dauid desired to see, & saw it; as Paul teacheth, saying, That God commanded the light to shine out of darknesse, even in our hearts, that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God might shine in the face of Iesus Christ, whose glory we see in the preaching of his word; wherein he declareth the riches of his glory vpon the vessels of mercy, which he hath prepared vnto glory. This glory the more  
the

88 The Imitation of

the spirituall man beholdeth, the more is he moued with desire to see more and more, and can neuer be sufficiently filled with that heavenly Contemplation. Much were the Disciples moued at the sight of Christs transfigured glory; in so much as they desired to haue enjoyed the sight of it still, so glorious it was, that their minds were euen raiisht with the beauty thereof. So David desired to dwell in the Temple of the Lord; not for a day, but all the daies of his life, to behold the beauty, the godnesse, and mercies of God, reuealed in his Word, and to exercise himselfe in prayer.

Where

*Dauids resolution.* 8,

Where God is duly and truly called vpon by a holy Congregation, there appeareth the glozy and beauty of Iehouah. There is the Arke of the Lord, the presence of the mighty God of Iacob: whose glozy filleth the Temple, which the faithfull man seeth with a spirituall eye; but the carnall man, though bodily present in the same Temple, apprehendeth it not. As when Paul was conuerted, he saw the glozy of God shine vpon him; but they that iournied with him, though nere him, saw nothing. So that God is onely seene of them, to whom hee pleaseth to reueale himselfe.

This

This beauty of the Lord  
 shineth in the hearts of Gods  
 elect childzen, by the reuelation  
 of the holy Ghost, which  
 none seeth but themselves.  
 And they take such swart de-  
 light in the beholding of the  
 face of God in Christ, as  
 they doe receiue in their  
 soules the very Impression of  
 the Image of the glory of the  
 onely begotten Sonne of the  
 Father, full of grace and truth:  
 euen as Moses receiued thro-  
 row the splendor of the glory  
 of God vpon Mount Sinai  
 in his countenance, such an  
 impression of that glory,  
 that the childzen of Israel  
 could not endure to be-  
 hold with their eyes the glo-

ry of his countenance.

That remaineth then, but that we neglect not the continuall visitation of the temple of God, to accompany the Congregation in the hearing of that heavenly Word, to pray vnto God for his blessings, and to giue him praise for his benefits. And the Lord open our spirituall eyes, that we mayeuen here behold his beautie, and bee hereafter partakers of his glory.

*A Praier for spirituall knowledge, and increase of our holy desires to visit the Temple of God, to heare his Word, to pray vnto him, and to praise him.*

**O** Gracious Lord God, most louing, who reiectest none that come vnto thee with a perfect heart; and none can come vnto thee vnlesse thou call him, as well by thy inward Grace as by thy outward Word: Vouchsafe according to the riches of thy Grace to grant, that I may be strengthened by thy Spirit in  
the

*Dauids resolution.* 93

the inner man, that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith, and that my whole spirit, soule and body, may be kept blamelesse, to the coming of the Lord Iesus. For thou knowest, Lord, what I am by nature, a man vnworthy to enter vnder thy roose, or to presse into the place where thine honour dwelleth.

For thou art a God that lovest righteousness, and acceptest of such as are of cleane hearts, and whose conuersations are vpright before thee: but I am a sinner and corrupt, as all my fathers were; Cleanse me therefore, O gracious Lord God, in the bloud of Iesus Christ, and make me fit to approach

94 The Imitation of  
proach thine holy Temple,  
that I may see thy beautie,  
and behold thy glory. Open  
mine eares that I may heare;  
prepare my heart that I may  
vnderstand what thou teach-  
est in thy word: Enlighten  
mine inward eies, the eies of  
my soule, that I may see thee,  
and take comfort in thy pre-  
sence. And open my lips, that  
I may speake vnto thee in  
faith, and answer mee againe  
in loue. Teach mee that cele-  
stiall language, that may moue  
thee to heare me.

For what booteth it me to  
come into thy house with  
deafe eares, not to heare thee?  
without attention, to vnder-  
stand thee? mute, and not be  
able

able to speake vnto thee?

Yet I know, good Father, that thou hearest them that cannot speake, and thou teachest them that vnderstand not; and thou openest the eies of them that see not: such is thy loue towards vs, as thou acceptest euen of the language of heartie sighes, whither they be for sinne, or for want of spirituall graces: Thou knowest the inward desires of the heart, tending to good or euill.

I am sorry, good Father, that any corruption lurketh in my defiled heart, to keepe out that blessed guest thy Spirit. I cannot of my selfe abandon corruption: I cannot of  
my

96 The Imitation of  
my selfe to mortifie my sinne,  
but that the dregges therefore  
will still remaine. But cast me  
not out of thine holy Tem-  
ple, because I am a sinner; but  
rather, because I am a sinner,  
admit to visit thy Temple, to  
heare thy Word, that I may  
learne to liue more and more  
obediently vnto thee.

Make thou my heart cleane  
and I shall bee all cleane; so  
shall I visit thine house to ho-  
nour thee, and comfort my  
selfe by thy holy presence,  
and shall take spirituall plea-  
sure in thy beautie, and be fi-  
nally pertaker of thy glory.

Thou louest righteousness,  
O make me righteous: Thou  
hatest iniquity, abandon my  
sinnes:

*Dauids resolution.* 97

sinnes : Knit my heart vnto thee, that I may both feare and loue thy name. Giue me a holy desire to seeke thee, and to serue thee, both in the materiall Temple with thy people, and in all places, at all times ; for thou art euery where to be found. And where thou art, there is thy house ; for thou dwellest not in Temples made with hands, but in the heauens, and in the hearts of them whom thou hast sanctified.

Turne thy face vnto me, O Lord, for thy face I seeke : Shew me thy beauty and glory of thy countenance, and change mee into thine owne Image by thy Spirit, and in

G

the

98      The Imitation of  
the same Spirit admit me con-  
tinually to visit thy holy Tem-  
ple.

Make my heart stable and  
vnblameable before thee in  
holinesse, that I may serue  
thee with a sincere and pure  
heart, and conscience vndefi-  
led : That I come not into  
thine house onely to seeme re-  
ligious, but in true faith and  
due reuerence, and giue thou  
a blessing vnto my godly de-  
sires, Amen.

VERSE

VERSE 3.

In the time of trouble he shall  
hide me in his Tabernacle,  
in the secret place of his  
Pauilion shall he hide mee,  
and set me vpon a Rocke.

**T**he very name of  
Trouble is feare-  
full to a worldly  
man, for he loues  
pleasure & ease,  
and when trouble commeth,  
he is cast downe, and is (as  
it were) at deaths doore: but  
the true childe of God being  
fore-warned, that if he will  
line godly, he must looke for

100 The Imitation of

and prepare himselfe to suffer  
trouble and affliction in this  
life: Trouble therefore doth  
little or nothing moue him  
when it commeth, because  
when he first entred into the  
schoule of christianity, he lear-  
ned that the loue of God, & the  
loue of the world, could not  
stand together with his pro-  
fession, and that there is a  
kinde of enmity betwene the  
childzen of God and the loue  
of the world, or at least no  
agreement; And that is the  
cause that the god are most  
afflicted, and the worldlings  
prosper most: The first are  
innocent, in whom there is  
neither gall nor bitternesse;  
the other, as they are coue-  
tous,

*Dauids resolution.* 101

tous, so are they commonly proud and enuious. The first is commonly injured, and beares it with patience: the other triumphs ouer them that resist them not, but haue onely in all their troubles recourse vnto God, whose they are, being assured that he in the time of trouble will be their defence, and hide them in his Tabernacle, which was onely godly Dauids refuge, being often and many waies afflicted, as at large before appeareth.

God sendeth affliction vpon his owne dearest childe, when oftentimes he letteth the wicked goe free; yet is not God vniust in this, nor

partiall, in sparing the euill,  
and punishing the good. He  
hath his ends in both, accor-  
ding to his heavenly wis-  
dome, who knoweth how to  
deale with both. And he that  
seemeth most to be spared,  
and thinkes himselfe in best  
case, is in greatest danger;  
and he that seemeth in most  
danger, is nearestt greatest  
happynesse: Whosoever in-  
discreet men measure their  
felicity by this worlds ful-  
nesse, and freedome from  
troubles; and censure the  
dearestt children of God to be  
surely out of his fauour, by  
reason of their manifold af-  
flictions. And yet they say  
that the simple nurse, though  
she

She loue her Infant neuer so  
dearely, she will weane it  
from the bzeast by some bit-  
ter thing, when she thinkes  
her milke not good for the  
childe; And that a Father, if  
he loue his childe, will with  
the rod of correction restraine  
him from things dangerous.  
And thinke they, that our  
heauenly Father thinkes it  
not fit to weane his owne  
childzen from this hurtfull  
world, that they perish not  
with worldlings: But when  
he striketh the wicked, it is  
in his anger, as the begin-  
ning of their perpetuall sor-  
rowes, by whose seuerer pu-  
nishments here, his owne  
childzen may bee terrified

104 The Imitation of  
from committing like sins,  
by example of their punish-  
ments.

Hee that will liue godly  
must suffer affliction; yet not  
aboue their strength, for God  
putteth to his hand, to mode-  
rate and mitigate the weight  
of their burden. The trou-  
bles and afflictions of the  
faithfull seeme more intol-  
erable to the beholders, then  
to themselves that seele them,  
and haue a liuely faith and  
constancy to beare them:  
Great and many are the trou-  
bles, euen of the righteous;  
but God delinereth them out  
of all. In the time of trouble  
he hides them in his Taber-  
nacle, in the secret place of his  
Pau-

Paulion shall he hide them,  
and set them vpon a Rocke.  
He hid Dauid from Saul, and  
Moses from Pharaohs mur-  
derers: his Tabernacle is  
alwaies open to entertaine  
them, that in their troubles  
fly for shelter to him: His  
fauour is the Rocke that can-  
not be moued; his prou-  
dence, the mountaine of their  
rest and refuge.

Troubles are but for a  
moment, and then cometh  
comfort; therefore doe the  
children of God with pati-  
ence, great alacritie and ioy  
vndergoe them. But contra-  
ry, the comfort of the wicked  
is here short and momenta-  
ny; but the future mis-  
erie

106 The Imitation of  
rie shall haue no end.

Seeing then that no man,  
especially such as are Gods  
dearest child;en, can liue here  
in this earthly Pilgrimage,  
but he must looke fo; and en-  
dure troubles: Who will not  
then prepare himselfe with  
constancy and patience to  
embrace them when they  
come?

The holy Ghost by the pen  
of godly David, hath assured  
the po;re oppressed & afflicted  
childzen of God, neuer to be  
forgotten: Their hope shall  
not perish fo; ever, fo; God  
is not an idle obseruer, o; a  
carelesse spectator of the af-  
flictions and miseries: of  
those that are his: Though  
he

*Dauid's resolution.* 107

he suffer thē to be oppressed long; as some with enemies, as Dauid; some by losse of goods, as Iob; some by imprisonment, as Ioseph; some with sickness, as Hezekiah; and withall to permit the wicked to moche and deride them, for that they trusting in God, are suffered thus to be afflicted; and notwithstanding their prayers not to be deliuered or reloued, which is no small tentation. But these men looke into the outward prosperity of men, and commend them, entertaine them; embrace them; as if all cause of loue were due to them that were loaden with lucre. As for the poore, they are

108 The Imitation of  
are despised, contemned, and  
had in continuall derision, of  
such onely indeed as are  
blinde, and see not; ignorant,  
and know not; dull, and ob-  
serue not, That there is a  
God that careth for such as  
worldlings cast off: that hee  
embraceth his poore that the  
wealthy despise, and that he  
loueth them that the world-  
lings hate; And that in the  
time of trouble hee hideth  
them in his Tabernacle, with-  
in the secret place of his Pa-  
uilion shall hee hide them:  
Yea, the very Angels of  
God (whom man seeth not)  
pitcheth round about them  
that feare him and call vpon  
him, and deliuereth them;  
there

therefore though the godly be  
poore, the Lord thinketh on  
them.

Many a means condemned  
childe of God, (having little  
meanes) by the blessing of  
God, doe eat with more con-  
tented, and more salutary  
saturity, than many times  
doe the most wealthy of the  
abundance of all their table  
dainties: A little that the  
righteous hath, is better than  
the abundance of the vngodly  
rich. Let no man therefore  
faint nor feare, when trou-  
ble, affliction, or persecution  
commeth; but rather reioyce,  
knowing that tribulation  
bringeth forth patience; and  
patience, experience; and ex-  
perience

perience, Hope; and Hope  
 maketh not ashamed; but  
 assureth the faithfull of the  
 goodnesse and loue of God,  
 which is shed abroad in our  
 hearts by the holy Ghost: so  
 that howsoever we be scor-  
 ned, we need not blush at our  
 troubles and afflictions, but  
 at our finnes that procure  
 them: yet are they vnto the  
 child;en of God but whole-  
 some medicines to cure  
 them, and to prevent them:  
 onely vnseasonable to the carnall  
 minde, which also doe accu-  
 stome to patience, which by  
 experience cherisheth and  
 confirmeth our hope, which  
 through faith is an assured  
 testimony vnto our consci-  
 ence,

*Dauid's resolution.* 111

ence, that we are beloned of God, so much the more, by how much he keepeth vs vnder, and in obedience through afflictions. For, if he leaueth vs vnto our owne corrupt conversations without correction, so much the stronger grow we in sinne: therefore necessary it is, that we should often feele his correcting rod, lest at the last he should con-found vs with his deuouring sword; for if we should bee without trouble, which is our correction, whereof all Gods children are partakers, we could not but account our selues bastards, and no sonnes: And if his corrections keepe vs in obedience,

112 The Imitation of

dience, then we may assure  
our selves, he will hide vs in  
his Tabernacle, that no pow-  
er or policy of the wicked  
shall finde vs out to hurt  
vs.

As men are in number  
many, and their affections  
diuers, & none liueth with-  
out some trouble or afflicti-  
on, not all in one measure or  
in like degree: so is every  
man comforted or cast down  
according to the measure of  
his saintnesse or faith, so  
many men may bee equall  
partakers of one and the  
same trouble, yet not of e-  
quall resolution to beare it.

Some men haue great af-  
flictions, and beare them  
with

*Dauids resolution.* 113

with great patience; some small, and yet cry out vnder the burthen of them; some men haue many troubles and yet account them few; some few, and yet account them many, some haue scarce full afflictions, yet they repute them saourable; some very saourable crosses, yet esteeme them very fierces and cruell; some haue long and tedious afflictions, yet supposed short; some very short, yet conceiued long and cumbersome.

This ariseth onely of the difference of mens faith and frailty. The first is bold and strong, able to beare and vndergoe whatsoeuer it pleaseth

114. The Imitation of  
seth God to lay vpon them;  
saying with faithfull Dauid,  
God is my hope and strength  
and my portion. The second  
is weake and sinketh vnder  
the burthen of most easie tri-  
alls, because they cannot say  
in their hearts as Dauid did,  
the Lord is my rocke and my  
saluation, nor assure them-  
selues y<sup>e</sup> God will hide them  
in his Tabernacle, in the se-  
cret place of his pavilion.

And what is this hiding  
of his Saints, but his conti-  
nuall watchfulnesse ouer  
them, and his prouidence in  
keeping and defending them:  
hee sets them vpon a rocke,  
namely, hee taketh them into  
his owne protection, and  
none

*Dauids resolution.* 115

none is able to take them out of his hands; therefore are they constant in all their troubles, let them lose their children: let them be robbed of their goods, afflicted in their bodies, bybzaided of their enemies, condemned for Hypocrites, persecuted as Heretikes, or brought to extreme pouerty; let them endure all these and more troubles with holy Iob, yet will they retaine their constancy & confidence in God, full knowing that hee in whom they trust is faithfull in his promises; and his power is absolute, and that in the time of their trouble hee will hide them in his Tabernacle,

116 The Imitation of

nacle, in the secret place of his pavilion, hee will hide them and set them vpon a rocke.

There is no trouble, triall or affliction of what kinde soener, but the dearest and most beloued of God haue bene partakers of them. Abel was murdered by Cain his wicked brother for his sincere worship of God. Faithfull Abraham was not free from troubles, from doubting and feare; he was commanded to offer his dearest sonne Isaac in sacrifice, in whose seede the generall blessing was promised: being afraid of his life, for his wifes sake, was twice driven to faine vntruths, both  
to

to Pharaoh in Ægypt, and  
Abimelech King of Gerar:  
He had trouble by Lot his  
brother, he had griefe for the  
destruction of Sodome, be-  
sides many other troubles.  
Isaak likewise for feare of his  
life for Rebecca his wife, by  
his vntruth exposed her cha-  
stity to the will of a heathen  
King: he was afflicted by the  
Philistines, he was crossed in  
his desire of preferring Esau  
before Iacob in the blessing.  
Iacob was forced to flee out  
of his owne Country, and  
from his friends, and to be a  
seruant in a strange land, for  
feare of his brother Esau, that  
threatned to kill him: being  
enuiet by Labans his Un-  
cles

118 The Imitation of

cles sonnes, he fled with his  
wines and children, he was  
pursued by Laban: he was  
encountred by an Angel that  
wrestled with him all the  
night, thooke him fearefully  
and lamed him: he marched  
in great feare and perplexity  
with his wines children and  
broues, towards his offen-  
ded brother Esau, who came  
against him with foure hun-  
dred men: he was miserably  
tormented for the supposed  
death of his dearest sonne Jo-  
seph, and much perplexed for  
his sonnes murthuring his  
neighbour Sechemites. Jo-  
seph was guiltlesly accused  
and wrongfully imprisoned.  
Moses was like to haue bene  
slaine

slaine by the Angell in the  
Anne, for not circumcising  
his sonne, prevented by Zip-  
porah his wife, who after  
circumcised him, and cast the  
foze skinne of her sonne at  
Moses feet, saying, Thou art  
indeed a bloody husband vn-  
to me: many other troubles  
he had for the disobedience of  
the people of Israel. Not one  
of Gods children haue bene  
free from troubles, therefore  
let none refuse to take vp the  
Crosse of Christ, who in his  
owne person suffered many  
reproaches, ignominies, and  
at last the death of the crosse  
for vs: None of his Apostles  
escaped most cruell tor-  
ments, some were stoned to  
death,

120 The Imitation of

death, some slaine with the sword, euery of them had their troubles and toziments, and all the Fathers of the Primitive Church had their severall miserable ends for Christ, and yet tenderly beloved of God. Shall we then that haue the like and the same benefit by the death of Christ, be ashamed of his Crosse? Shall we thinke to enioy his glozy, and shall we suffer none of his disgrace? We are his members, and he is our head, and shall our head suffer and we live at ease?

Satan is malicious, he can endure none that liueth vprightly, but hee will vse  
his

his instruments to molest them; if hee cannot induce them to sinne against God with a high hand, hee will procure them troubles, and such as wherewith if it were possible, he would so weaken their faith in God, that they should vse any vngodly meanes to free themselves; and will perswade them that God punisheth none but such as he hath no loue vnto: but the truly faithfull know that he is a liar from the beginning, and therefore will not giue care vnto his false suggestions; and therefore when any afflictions doe befall them, they will take them as indeed they are, Gods lo-

v ing

222 The Imitation of

uing corrections and wholesome preseruatiues, to keepe them from all things that may offend God, and will in their troubles seek no other refuge, but (as the little Chickens flye to the wings of the Hen) so they runne and hide themselves in Gods protecting Tabernacle, who is ready to receiue them into his saving pavilion, and to set them vp on the rocks of his salvation.

Experience hath found it a dangerous thing to liue in carnall security and without trouble; as long as David was pursued by his enemies, as long as he was visited

sited with troubles, he could  
seek the Lord, he was exer-  
cised in continuall prayer,  
and finding God ready to  
helpe him, he could say, I will  
goe forward in the strength  
of the Lord, then he could de-  
clare that God was his de-  
sence, and that he should ne-  
uer be confounded: But  
when he had no enemies, and  
all his troubles were remo-  
ued, he forgot that ever he  
was in danger, he lived at  
ease, took his pleasure and  
delights, walking without  
fear on the top of his house  
securely, delighting himselfe  
in his pleasant prospects,  
and beheld a woman bathing  
her selfe; then his heart

V 2 which

The Imitation of  
which was before set vpon  
God, was set on fire of lust,  
& committed grievous sins  
without remorse, untill God  
sent Nathan to put him in  
minde of that which he had  
forgotten a whole peere to-  
gether, then was he stricken  
with another kinde of feare,  
not of humane enemies, but  
of Gods iustice, and where  
before he continually be-  
sought God to hide him from  
his enemies, now he cryeth,  
Haue mercy vpon me O God,  
according to thy louing kind-  
nesse, according to the multi-  
tude of thy mercies, put away  
mine iniquities. I know my  
iniquities, and my sin is euer  
before me. Sinne we see is the  
the

*Dauids resolution.* 125

the fruit of security, and by that godly mans example, it appeareth that some troubles are better than a quiet and secure estate, as apponeth also by Hezekiah, who being magnified in the sight of all Nations, and was free from feare of trouble, he became proud, his heart was lifted vp; but when God had sent him an enemy Sennacherib, to rouse him by threats, & sickness to afflict him, then he became humble, then he set to his prayers to God, and God then did hide him in his Tabernacle, in the secret place of his pavilion did he hide him, & in his sickness set him again upon the rocke of health.

¶ 3 Gods

Gods owne childzen are knowne by his fatherly correcting them: and they that come into no troubles in this life, liue they neuer so carnally contented, may suspect themselves, and may be suspected to be none of his: and therefore saith Eliphaz to Iob, Blessed is the man whom God correcteth and afflicteth here. If then affliction and troubles be the way to become blessed, or at least an argument of Gods fauour; with what patience should we endure them; nay, with what ioy should we embrace them? Saint Paul accounted the afflictions of this present life, not to be worthy of the  
glory

*Dauids resolution.* 117

glory which we shall enjoy  
hereafter.

Why therefore should we  
feare or repine against trou-  
ble, seeing it is so necessary  
for vs? It is not yet meant,  
neither is it required of vs  
voluntarily to runne into, or  
to seek troubles, as some  
Votaries do wilful pouerty &  
other needlesse crosses, which  
is not onely not required  
of them of God, but offensive  
vnto him, being more idle-  
nelle, one of the finnes of So-  
dome. It is required of vs,  
onely when troubles of what  
kinde soeuer befall vs, to  
vndergoe them with pati-  
ence, faith and constancy;  
and then shall God hide vs in

his

128 The Imitation of  
his Tabernacle, in the secret  
place of his Pavilion shall hee  
hide vs and set vs vpon a  
Rocke. To him let vs com-  
mit our soules in well doing  
as vnto our faithfull Crea-  
tor, knowing that we are not  
afflicted by chance, but by the  
will of God our most louing  
Father in Iesus Christ, the  
Rocke of our saluation, him  
let vs seeke in trouble, and to  
him let vs pray.

*A Prayer in whatsoever  
trouble.*

**O** Lord my God in Iesus  
Christ, who art onely  
wife

*Dauids resolution.* 129

wise in disposing all things  
for all men, and to whose  
will all creatures in Heauen,  
Earth and Sea are subiect, and  
none, be he neuer so mighty,  
can withstand what thou wilt  
haue done: Open thine eyes  
and behold me, open thine  
eares and heare mee, open  
thine hands and releue mee.  
I am in trouble, not by  
chance, but of thine owne wil;  
not in thine anger to destroy  
me, but in thy loue to reforme  
me; my sinnes I doe confesse  
haue offended thee, and yet  
are they strong in mee, it is a  
deadly disease which none can  
cure but thou through the  
bloud of thy sonne; O wash  
me thoroughly from mine ini-

H 5 quire.

130 The Imitation of  
quity, & cleanse me from my  
sinnes, vse not thy seuerity a-  
gainst me, O Lord, for I were  
neuer able to abide it: but as  
thou hast begunne gently to  
correct me, so proceed not as a  
iust Iudge, but as a louing Fa-  
ther; so shall not I wax worse  
and worse, but shall grow  
from vertue to vertue, from  
faith to repentance, and con-  
sequently to newnelle of life  
by thy spirit.

Make therefore thy cor-  
rections light vnto me by thy  
supporting hand, that though  
they be many, they exceed  
not my power to beare them,  
for I am of my selfe weake, but  
assisted by thy spirit, I shall  
become strong; and though I  
be

*Dauids resolution.* 131

be ignorant how to ease mee  
of this burthen, he shall teach  
mee that repentance, that  
through faith in thy Sonne,  
shal procure the mitigation of  
mine afflictions: though they  
be many and of diuers kinds,  
they are all knowne of thee,  
and all necessary for mee, be-  
cause thou hast sent them, and  
that not in vaine, for all worke  
and worke together for my  
good through thy blessing.

I am cast downe, I am  
brought low, I am scorned,  
because of my basenesse and  
troubles, but I beare it, and  
keepe silence when I heare  
the vpbraidings and con-  
tempt of my late familiars,  
who abandon my ancient so-  
ciety,

132 The Imitation of

ciety, because they wax aloft  
and I become low: this yet  
comes not to passe without  
thee, thy hand is in euery acti-  
on for the good of thine: if  
enemies assaile me, thou bid-  
dest them; if pouerty and  
want oppresse me, thou sen-  
dest it; if sicknesse afflict me,  
thou doest it; and therefore  
good: and none of these shall  
exceed my strength, through  
thy strength. As for mine e-  
nemies thou canst bridle  
them, for pouerty and want  
thou canst supply them, for  
sicknesse and carnall infirmi-  
ties thou canst cure them: all  
these haue their turnes to vi-  
sitate me, onely to turne mee to  
thee.

Lord

*Dauids resolution.* 133

Lord I come vnto thee, re-  
iect me not, I pray vnto thee,  
deny me not; but as thou hast  
eares to heare, and eyes to see,  
euen from Heauen, heare my  
prayers and behold mine af-  
flictions; they are great, yet  
they shew the greatnesse of  
thy loue, that wouldst not  
that I perish, therefore im-  
brace I thy corrections as a  
gentle yoke, not heauy but on-  
ly to my carnall part, to which  
euery crosse seemeth a curse,  
and euery medicine seemeth  
mortall.

Beare with my weaknesse  
Lord, and lay not much trou-  
ble vpon mee, but according  
to the measure of mine affli-  
ction, let the measure of my  
patience

134 The Imitation of

patience be, and the measure  
of thy mercies. above mea-  
sure.

And as thou obseruest my  
sinnes, so consider what cor-  
rection is fit for my reformati-  
on. ~~most~~ know thou art iust,  
but most sweetly tempered  
with mercy, yet no equality  
betweene thy mercy and thy  
iustice, for all thy waies are  
mercy and truth, and there is  
no iniustice in thy seuerity,  
for thou shewest mercy to  
whom thou wilt shew mercy,  
and executeest iustice iustly.

Who then can complaine  
in whatsoever sharpe afflicti-  
on? when all mens sinnes are  
the cords that draw them vp-  
on them, and no man deser-  
ueth

*Davids resolution.* 135

ueth thy mercy to bee freed  
from them, therefore dis-  
claime I any merit of mine,  
Lord, to bee released, and  
craue onely mercy, for thou in  
thy mercy wilt blesse the righ-  
teous, and with fauour wilt  
compasse him about as with a  
shield, so that no affliction,  
crosse or trouble shall be too  
heauy for him.

Thou Lord hast promised  
to be a refuge for the poore,  
yea a refuge in due time, euen  
in greatest afflictions. O hide  
me therefore in thy Taber-  
nacle, in the secret place of thy  
pauilion hide me, and set me  
vpon a sure rocke.

VERSE

## VERSE 6.

That he will now lift vp my  
head about mine enemies  
round about me : therefore  
will I offer in his Taberna-  
cle sacrifices of ioy, I will  
sing and praise the Lord.



**D**avid having  
bin long be-  
set with e-  
nemies (af-  
ter he was  
constituted &  
also anointed King by Sa-  
muel ) by the malice of  
Saul, who sought his death,  
and continued many yeeres  
in

*Dauids resolution.* 137

in continual troubles, wher  
in being exercised, he betooke  
himselſe to prayer to God,  
lining in hope that the time  
would come wherein hee  
ſhould be ſcꝑd from Sauls  
tyranny, and as hee was a-  
nointed, ſo ſhould he bee at  
length enſtalled King, hauing  
in many yeres little oꝝ no  
breathing time, oꝝ freedome  
from afflictions, yet was his  
faith ſtrong, and his confi-  
dence in God firme, as ap-  
peareth by the firſt, ſecond  
and third verſes of this 27.  
Pſalme, wherein hee decla-  
reth the fauour of God to-  
wards him, that he was his  
lighe and his ſaluation, and  
his ſtrength, ſo that he feared  
not

not Saul, nor whatsoever  
 wicked enemies, being as-  
 sured that if they came vpon  
 him to take away his life,  
 God would make them to  
 stumble and fall, as by his  
 owne hands and Gods pro-  
 uidence Goliath fell, and after  
 Saul his enemy by his owne  
 sword: so that in the first  
 Verse hee took courage  
 through faith in God, and  
 sang, In the time of trouble  
 God shall hide me in his Ta-  
 bernacle, in the secret place  
 of his Pavilion shall he hide  
 me and set me vpon a Rocke.  
 And in this verse, Now shall  
 hee lift vp mine head aboue  
 mine enemies round about  
 me.

Then

Dauid's resolution. 139

When Saul was dead his mighty enemy, he took the Government of his Kingdome, but was not yet free from enemies; whereby wee may see, that the death of one enemy is the life of another; and to teach vs not to be secure at any time, but when one danger is past, to looke for another: yet not without hope, though cast downe, in the end to be lifted vp and raised againe. For as the River waxeth full, and decreaseth, and the Sea ebboeth and floweth, and as the sky cleareth and cloudeth; so doe the estates of men, high and low, rise and fall, and fall and rise. What a fall had  
Ioseph.

140 The Imitation of

Ioseph, being the darling of his Father, to be sold as a slave, to be falsely accused, and to be strictly imprisoned, and yet in the end to bee so highly advanced :

Now, saith David, shall he lift vp my head: as if hee could limit God the time to raise him. No doubt, it was not his meaning to tie God to a certaine time: but when Saul his Murtherer was dead, & the Crowne open for him, he might well say Now, that is, now hath God appointed the time to bring that to passe, which long before he had promised.

Indeed when he was made King, he might well say, that  
God

God had lifted vp his head aboue his enemies round about him; for he had many, as befoze is shewed, and not a few, euen of Sauls followers after; who when they saw Dauid exalted, might enuy his aduancement, being lifted vp so farre aboue them, and had then power to recompence their wickednesse against him. But he had no reuengefull spirit; if he had had, hee would haue reuenged himselfe vpon Shemey, that railed on him, and cursed him; and vpon Doeg, that discovered his abode to Saul: Neither of these did he touch, but as touching Shemey, though he swoze vnto him that hee would

141 The Imitation of

would not slay him; yet hee commanded Salomon, that he should cause his hoare head to goe to the graue with bloud: which it seemeth hee spake by the spirit of prophesie, fore-séeing that he should die by the sword.

Thus Dauid deliuered from his enemies, and lifted vp aboue them, sheweth the wonderfull power of God in preserving him, and his prouidence and loue in aduancing him, yet continued hee not long without his troubles, and enemies to exercise him, though he were now established in his Kingdome: for he hauing peace & security a while, we find into what sinnes

sinnes he fell, though he were  
advanced aboue his cozpozall  
enemies, his spirituall foes  
grew stronger than he; there-  
fore it is good that the chil-  
dren of God, though neuer  
so great in the world, haue  
afflictions and troubles, lest  
they forget God, as this god-  
ly King for a time did, yet  
vpon repentance God raised  
him againe: Which example  
of sinning we must auoid,  
and imitate his repentance.

By his assured confidence  
in God he still withstood, and  
preuailed against all that  
rose vp against him: none  
could make him afraid, but  
rested still assured that God  
would now, namely whenso-  
euer

The limitation of  
euer he was beset with dan-  
ger, list vp his head aboue all  
his enemies round about  
him: His enemies in their  
policies, became soles; in  
their strength, weake; and  
all their devices brought to  
nought. So that David might  
well sing this ioyfull Song,  
The Lord hath lifted vp my  
head aboue all mine enemies  
round about me.

Nothing preuaileth with-  
out vs against God: None  
can be lifted vp to sit safely  
without God: therefore the  
man that is wise being ad-  
vanced, will imitate David  
in faith, and a holy resoluti-  
on: then shall he mount that  
rocke that shall neuer bee  
moued,

*Dauids resolution.* 145

moued, God shall maintaine his lot, so that troubles shall not dismay him, enemies shall not hurt him, neither shall any thing make him afraid.

None must yet stand in conceit, that Dauids infirmities and falls should bee a privilege for them to commit sinne; but rather let his fall be a motive to them, to be watchfull over their waies, for the preventing of like danger, and to beware of security: For easie it is for a man to fall of himselfe, as David did, but without God not to rise againe, and repent as David did. Though he fell and was lifted vp, Saul fell

146 The Imitation of  
and neuer rose ; Peter fell and  
rose againe ; but Iudas fell,  
and that finally.

David had an eye vnto his  
waies, and respect vnto his  
walkings, to prevent a se-  
cond fall, so as his enemies  
could not preuaile : yet he  
confessed, that it was the  
Lord that supported him,  
and made him to abide in  
safetie. It was not his owne  
power, or wit, or policy,  
but the mercy of God that  
preserued him, and that lifted  
vp his head aboue his ene-  
mies. He was constant, and  
waited the Lords leisure : he  
made not haste as he might  
hane done, hauing Saul twice  
within his power : though he  
were

*Dauids resolution.* 147

were anointed King, yet  
world he lay no violent  
hands vpon him that was  
pre-anointed and inuested,  
but waited his time, as lo-  
seph did, whose head was lif-  
ted vp aboue his enuious  
brether. Mordochay, and  
the Ietwes likewise with pa-  
tience waited the time, and  
were lifted vp aboue Haman,  
but otherwise, higher by the  
gallowes than they.

Many are lifted vp aboue  
their enemies in conceit, and  
yet themselues lifted vp as  
enemies against themselues:  
for the more man insulteth in  
pride over other men, the  
more the mighty triumph  
over the weake, the rich over

148 The Imitation of

the poore, the glorious ouer  
the base: and the more that  
they in authority abuse and  
tyrannise ouer them they go-  
uerne, so much the further  
off are they from the true lis-  
ting vp, how high soeuer they  
cary their heads: and so much  
the more enemies they are  
vnto themselves.

There is no true listing  
vp without lone, for God is  
lone, he listeth vp the heart  
and soule through faith aboue  
the outward man, euen to  
haue their conuersation in  
heauen. This is the true and  
sweetest aduancement, this  
is the glorious listing vp of  
the head: And thus was Da-  
uid also lifted vp spiritually,  
to ge:

together with his outward  
lifting vp, aboue his corpo-  
rall enemies.

Many good men are aduan-  
ced to honoꝛ and office; To  
what end? Not onely not to  
gaine earthly gloꝛy thereby,  
oꝛ to enrich themselues by  
sinister meanes thereby, and  
to abuse their places, and  
wꝛong their lister and lifting  
vp: but as David being lif-  
ted vp, did acknowledge it to  
be the Lords doing: and as  
he was aduanced by him, so  
did he seeke by all meanes to  
aduance his gloꝛy; and  
though he were lifted vp a-  
boue his enemies, he insulted  
not ouer them, but gaue God  
the praise, that his enemies

150 The Imitation of  
triumphed not over him.

Praise and thanksgiving  
are due vnto God, for every  
benefit and blessing he be-  
stoweth vpon vs; and he re-  
quireth it, especially of them  
whom he lifteth vp aboue  
their enemies: and that they  
be lowly in their owne eyes,  
and louing to all, euen to  
their enemies. And to learne  
also of Paul, in a low estate  
to be patient, and being lif-  
ted vp to be thankfull, nei-  
ther to be grieved at the one,  
nor to glory too much in the  
other: In the one, pray to be  
constant; in the other, giue  
glory to God.

Dauid, when he knew by  
his anointing, that he should  
be

*Dauids resolution.* 151

be King after Sauls death, continued yet humble, and was yet contented to keepe his fathers thorne (a meane office, so; a man anointed to be a King) and thought it no disparagement. And when he was indeed exalted, he set not out his glory by outward vanities: neither was he guarded with swaggering, swearing Drunkards, and with vile and vitious persons, though with sufficient noble attendants (his Worchie) abandoning his house of the knowne wicked, and retained such into his service as he found to feare God. And in stead of worldly vain: glory, he went into the Tem-

The Imitation of  
ple of God, and there offered  
the sacrifices of prayer and  
praise : and not himselfe a-  
lone, but called the people to-  
gether, and with them went,  
not once, but many times in-  
to the house of the Lord : He  
was not ashamed, being a  
King, to be the foremost in  
the service of God. And let  
vs praise God for his like  
mercy boughsased vnto vs,  
and let vs imitate godly ex-  
amples.

There is a lively patterne of  
a thankfull heart to God for  
his advancement, contrary  
to the course of many, who  
being lifted vp, not aboue  
their enemies, but aboue  
their equals ; of whom many  
giue

give rather thanks to their owne wit and policy, and to inferiour meanes, friends, or money. But such their advancement is but as the building of Babel, & though their language be not confounded (but many times changed) their manners often altered: They rise without God, and oftentimes we see them fall of themselves. If therefore thou be exalted, remember Dauid, by whom, and by what meanes he was lifted up. He praised, and the Lord heard him, and he gave the whole glory to God.

Whatsoever thou art, bee thou neuer so eminent, think not praise and praising God

to be base exercises, or things indifferent. They are the works of Gods Saints, and therein they exercise themselves day and night. But woe to them, that onely make their prayers and suits vnto men, forgetting God, and that being lifted vp, offer the sacrifice of praise vnto men to their own devices, to their Siluer and Gold, &c. Forget not God. that can winke at ambitious mens lifting vp, and laugh at their fall.

But when God affordeth lawfull means to lift vp any, he giveth the assurance of his approbation, and if they pray for good successe, they shall prosper and profit the place they

Dauids resolution. 155

they execute, and the place  
shall iustifie their integritie:  
for, as without him, nothing  
can come to good effect; So,  
to whatsoever action he set-  
teth his helping hand, it can-  
not but prosper: And he that  
is by him lifted vp, let him  
not forget to pray and to  
praise God, lest he hurle him  
downe againe, and his latter  
end proue worse than the be-  
ginning.

A

156 The Imitation of

*A Praier with thanksgiving to  
God, for defence from ene-  
mies, in that they haue not  
preuailed against vs.*

**O** Eternall, most wise, most  
louing, and most power-  
full Lord God, who guidest,  
gouernest, and disposest all  
things for all men, according  
to thine owne will, and  
knowest what is meet, necessa-  
rie, and expedient for all those  
that are thine; Grant that  
whatsoever befalleth me here  
in this mortall life, be it po-  
uertie or riches, prosperitie or  
aduersitie, trouble or peace,  
yea, if enemies rise vp against  
me,

*Dauids resolution.* 157

me, all may be for my good,  
for as much as nothing com-  
meth to passe but by thy pro-  
vidence in loue.

Pouerty thou suppliest with  
plentie, if thou seest it good  
for me : troubles thou canst  
remoue, if expedient, & canst  
send me quietnesse and com-  
fort; enemies thou canst re-  
straine, and howsoeuer they  
seeme to insult ouer me, thou  
canst lift vp my head aboue  
them : And though I bee  
brought low, and for a time  
endure disgrace, ignominy &  
shame, euen among my fami-  
liars; yet as long as it plea-  
seth thee to accept and retaine  
me in thy fauour, I shall not  
be discouraged, being assured  
that

158 The Imitation of

that thou canst and wilt in  
thy good time shew thy selfe  
the God of my saluation: thou  
wilt giue mee fauour againe,  
euen of those that now scoffe  
and deride mee for my misfe-  
ries, they shall againe receiue  
mee in loue, seeing thy fa-  
therly respect vnto me: For  
I know, that I seeking helpe  
and comfort of thee, shall a-  
gain reioyce and be glad in  
thee: for though I be poore  
and needy, though troubles  
abound and enemies rage a-  
gainst me, thou thinkest on  
me, and according to thy pro-  
mise wilt neuer leaue me nor  
forsake me: therefore if all the  
world disdaine me, be thou  
fauourable vnto me. O helpe  
me

*Dauid's resolution.* 159

me and deliuer me from them  
that afflict me, and saue me,  
for I trust in thee; and none  
that trusteth in thee shall bee  
cast downe for euer. I powre  
out my whole desire before  
thee, my sorrowes and my  
sighes are not hid from thee;  
and though I seeme to faint,  
and my heart to faile me, be-  
cause my louers and my  
friends leaue me, by reason of  
my miseries, yet I wait on  
thee, for comming, I know  
thy helpe will come: for thou  
art an vpright Iudge, though  
thou haue brought me low, I  
know thou canst and wilt lift  
me vp againe; and they that  
thinke thou hast vterly forsa-  
ken me, shall see that there is

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a God that hath a care of his deiected people; though they say now, Where is thy God in whom thou seemest so much to trust? Dõth he helpe thee or releue thee? thou callest vpon him, but he heareth thee not; thou seemest to seeke him, but findest no helpe at his hands. O grieuous temptation to a weake minde: but it daunterh me not, I am confident in thy mercies; I faime not at these reproaches, for they vpbraide not me, but thee, saying as it were in their hearts, it is bootlesse for the distressed to trust in thee.

O consider this, my God, and permie mee not (though sore oppressed) to giue ouer calling

*Dauids resolution.* 161

calling continually and faithfully vpon thee, for with thee there is mercy, and with thee is timely redemption: though thou seeme to tarry long and to giue no eare vnto my prayers (which maketh those that are ignorant of thy waies to thinke thou hast utterly forsaken me) yet I know and am assured that thou forgettest me not; neither dost thou so leaue mee but that thou wilt returne vnto me again, and in the multitude of thy mercies lift me vp againe: and then shall they that thus haue censured me, finde and confesse, that indeed I haue not trusted in thee in vaine, and that thou art a God indeed, powerful,

## 162 The Imitation of

full, able and louing, willing  
and ready to helpe thine in the  
time of most need: I am thine,  
O Lord, for in all my troubles  
I haue hitherunto found thee  
my God, my helper, and my  
refuge, though there be that  
haue said there is no helpe for  
me in thee, I haue found them  
lyers, for thou hast neuer fai-  
led me nor forsaken mee hi-  
therunto, neither wilt thou  
faile me or forsake me for euer.

Thou hast euer beene my  
rocke and fortresse, and hast  
euer deliuered mee, therefore  
art thou worthy to be praited,  
yea I will praise thee, for I  
was left vnto thee as soone as  
I was borne, and thou hast  
euer beene a louing father vn-

to

*Dauids resolution.* 163

to me: though as a father thou  
hast gently corrected me, yet  
thy louing kindnes thou hast  
neuer withholden from me;  
but when in my greatest trou-  
bles and afflictions I haue  
beene like to perish, thou hast  
not left mee to the will of  
mine enemies, and when they  
they thought to reioyce most  
at my miseries, thou hast lif-  
ted vp my head aboue mine  
aduersaries: in thee therefore  
will I trust, and not be afraid  
what man can doe vnto me.  
Haste theeto help me, O God  
of my saluation, and praised  
bee thy holy name for euer,  
*Amen.*

VERSE

~~PSALM LXXV~~

## VERSE 7.

Hearken vnto my voice, O  
 Lord, when I cry, haue mer-  
 cy also vpon me and heare  
 me.



These words of Da-  
 uid import a most  
 earnest praier vn-  
 to God, though  
 seeming short, yet  
 containeth matter of god con-  
 sideration euen of vs, y in all  
 our necessities we should cry  
 vnto God, & teacheth vs that  
 when we are in distresse wee  
 may not lie still & thinke that  
 God will helpe vs, if we call  
 not vpon him; and againe we  
 may

*Dauids resolution.* 165

may call and cry and not be heard. As Dauids enemies when they were deservedly overcome, cryed for helpe at God, but he neglected them and reiected them, because they cried being a wicked people in their distresse for helpe at Gods hands whom they before despised. But contrarily, the children of Israel, the people of God cried vnto him in their distresse, and the Lord heard them and deliuered them, 1. Sam. 12. 10, 11. There are vocall cries, and there are cries that none heare but God, as the guiltlesse bloud of Abel yet cryeth vnto God for vengeance. Likewise the sinnes  
of

The Imitation of  
of Sodome and Gomorrah,  
cryed vnto God for iudge-  
ment, as sin and murther dai-  
ly doe: these are wofull cries,  
silent, and yet God heareth  
them in displeasure; where by  
we may learne, that sinne,  
and chiefly the murther of  
Innocents, be it neuer so se-  
cret, doe cry and shall be re-  
uealed, and though neuer so  
seeming to be grounded vpon  
pretended deuotion & zeale,  
it crieth to God for ven-  
geance.

Dauids cry was of another  
kinde; for where the former  
cries were the cries of the  
sinnes of the wicked against  
their wils, for reuenge a-  
gainst their owne impieties;

Dauid.

Dauids tended to the glozy of  
God and his owne succour  
and safetie : and therefore  
said he , Harken vnto my  
voice, O Lord, when I cry ;  
Which teacheth vs not to be  
mute, when any occasion of  
feare or affliction may moue  
vs to seeke the helpe of God :  
We must cry vnto God, not  
vnto dumb stocks and stones,  
nor to any dead creature or  
Angell, whom they are sonde-  
ly framed to represent, but  
vnto the liuing God ; he one-  
ly can heare, be our prayers  
never so secret and silent. He  
heard Moses and Anna, onely  
mouing their lips without  
sound. So that it is not the  
loudnesse of the voice, but the

The Imitation of  
the affection of the heart that  
maketh the cry, whereunto  
God giues care: many no  
doubt can and doe cry Lord,  
Lord, and that loud enough,  
and yet they are not heard  
because they cry not in faith.  
And therefore Dauid did not  
onely say, Lord hearken vnto  
my cry, but withall craued  
that God would haue mercy  
vpon him, for men may cry  
long enough and loud e-  
nough, and not be heard vn-  
lesse God shew mercy.  
Therefore saith Dauid, Hear-  
ken vnto my voice when I  
cry, haue mercy also vpon me  
& heare me, for God heareth  
no mans prayer but in his  
mercy, and therfore is mercy  
in

*Dauids resolution.* 169

in the first place to be sought,  
but by faith, for he y trusteth  
in the Lord, mercy shall com-  
passe him about; though we  
be in neuer so great misery  
or danger, if wee cry faith-  
fully vnto God, he will heare  
vs, and in his mercy helpe  
vs: As Dauid complained  
vnto God, saying, I am in a  
wonderfull strait, let vs now  
fall into the hands of the  
Lord, (for his mercies are  
great) and let vs not fall into  
the hands of men. God shew-  
eth mercy vnto thousands  
that loue him and keepe his  
Commandements, and hea-  
reth them: but the wicked  
and such as contemne his  
Word he will not heare, for  
they

170 The Imitation of

they cry not in faith, they cry  
onely so; their owne neces-  
sities, not referring the end  
of their desires to Gods glo-  
ry; they cry of themselves  
with the lips only, they come  
in their owne names, and re-  
spect onely themselves and  
their owne outward wants,  
and seele not no; acknow-  
ledge their inward defects;  
they are sinners and repent  
them not, they aske therefore  
and receiue not; They cry  
vnto mee, saith God, but I  
will not heare them, because  
they pray without faith and  
repentance. Therefore when  
affliction & anguish shall fall  
vpon them, they shall call vpon  
me, but I will not answer;  
they

Dauid's resolution. 171

they shall seeke me, but shall  
not finde me. But the faith-  
full afflicted he heareth, and  
such as depart from their  
sinnes and walke righteously  
besoꝛe him he considereth:  
as Dauid himselfe confes-  
seth, I cried vnto the Lord,  
saith he, and hee heard mee,  
and deliuered mee out of all  
my feare and trouble. They  
that feare the Lord need feare  
no trouble, foꝛ intercy com-  
passeth them about, on euery  
side Gods pꝛouidence atten-  
deth them, & they no sooneꝛ cal  
vpon God but hee heareth,  
nay besoꝛe they cry he is rea-  
dy to helpe them; foꝛ his eye  
is euer vpon them, euen at  
an instant to pꝛeuent what so-

172 The Imitation of

euery danger; therefore may  
the faithfull goe comfortably  
forward in the strength of  
the Lord trusting in him, and  
they shall neuer be ashamed:  
he is our strength and salua-  
tion and our defence: let vs  
powre out our hearts before  
him and say, Harken vnto  
my voice, O Lord, when I cry  
haue mercy also vpon me and  
heare me. Then will he assu-  
redly heare vs and helpe vs:  
he will delay no further time  
than may be for our good, he  
may seme vnto vs long in  
comming, but he will come  
in a time conuenient, and his  
delayes worke onely pati-  
ence and hope in vs, which if  
these graces haue their per-  
fect

fect working in vs, we shall  
finde that he will neuer faile  
vs nor forsake vs, howsoe-  
uer such as are ignorant of  
Gods power and prouidence  
may thinke, that vnlesse God  
come at our first call he will  
not come at all, which is an  
argument they beleue not  
Gods promises, for if they  
did they would make no such  
haste, but wait the Lords lei-  
sure, not that he is so busied  
as he cannot intend either to  
heare vs or helpe vs, for his  
care is alwaies open to  
heare, and his hand alwaies  
able to helpe euery man as  
well as one, and that at an  
instant; but we may not li-  
mit the holy one of Israel, for

174 The Imitation of

hee knowes the times and seasons fit for every of his intentions; Shall wee thinke that David in his extremest dangers did not pray for deliury, yet though his faith were great, he was not presently set free, though he cried out, How long Lord, how long, wilt thou absence thy selfe for ever? Ioseph likewise in his captivity and imprisonment, Shall wee thinke that hee cried not vnto the Lord for deliury, and that instantly? and yet he suffered him to endure the very iron setters and stocks untill Gods appointed time came, and then when the counsell of the Lord had sufficiently

ficiently tried them, then he deliuered them, and shewed the abundance of his mercies towards them in aduancing them both: we may not therefore murmur or repine at Gods corrections, though they continue in our opinions long; it is not onely that it is vsauoy to our carnall mindes but for want of faith, for where faith is strong it produceth hope, and in hope we wait with patience; and we finde by experience that hope and patience shall not be in vaine. Then whosoever is afflicted, let them cry vnto God to haue mercy vpon them, and that in a liuely faith, and he will at least ease

176 The Imitation of

them, if hee doe not altogether deliuer them: hee will keepe his owne vnder his owne hand, and not suffer them to haue the freedome of the raines at their owne pleasure, knowing the unrulinesse of our owne nature, which if he curbe it not, will runne into euery sinne, and make no conscience of any impiety: as we may see by holy Dauid himselfe, when God permitted him but to haue a little liberty, a small breathing time from his troubles; into what sinnes did he runne, yet a man chosen of God; if he so farre forgot himselfe, how shall we that haue not his spirituall gifts

*Dauids resolution.* 177

gifts refraine our selues  
from offending God moze  
grofely in our security?

Troubles and afflictions  
fall not vpon vs without  
Gods prouidence, though  
Satan woꝝketh what he can  
to trouble vs, as appeareth  
in his tryng of Iob, to draw  
vs from God, but howsoer  
ner he aimeth to make vs di-  
strust God by his tentati-  
ons and afflicting vs, the  
moze doe the childeꝛen of God  
cleane vnto God foꝛ succour,  
and cry vnto him foꝛ mercy:  
and that which Satan inten-  
deth to be foꝛ our hurt, God  
woꝝketh it foꝛ our good, foꝛ  
all things worke together for  
the good of them that loue

178 The Imitation of

God, and are called of his purpose, namely, his owne elect, who as they are truly Gods owne, so they depend vpon him alone, and know that what crosse or affliction soeuer befall them, it comes from none but from their owne louing father, for their especial god to prevent greater danger, as the holy Apostle Paul himself confesseth, lest he should be exalted out of measure through the abundance of reuelations, there was giuen vnto him a pricke in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, because he should not be exalted out of measure. God seeing our corrupt nature, alwaies apt to

to be puffed vp with a kinde  
of pride and security, when  
wee see the abundance of  
Gods graces and fauours  
towards vs, in his wisdom  
and mercy taketh downe our  
ouer good conceits of our  
selues by corrections: as Da-  
uid before he was afflicted  
went awry; Manasses a great  
Idolater, by troubles was  
reclaimed, and then he prai-  
ed vnto God and humbled  
himselfe; wee may see it also  
in the prodigall sonne, who  
as long as hee had money to  
bestow vpon his vanities  
and lusts, he lived a rebelli-  
ous life against his father;  
but when he was afflicted by  
penury and want, he retur-  
ned

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ned home to his father, re-  
penting and crying vnto him  
in effect as here Dauid doth;  
O father hearken vnto my  
voice, I cry vnto thee for par-  
don, haue mercy also vpon me  
and heare me, as much as if  
hee had said, Father forgive  
mee.

Gods corrections, though  
griuous and vnsauoy for a  
time, yet good and profitable  
for vs., we are thereby the  
more drawne from the de-  
lighting in sinne, and made  
more obedient vnto the will  
of God, especially if they bee  
seasoned with reuerence to  
God that sends them with  
faith, repentance, and ser-  
uent praier: then shall wee  
finde

*Dauids resolution.* 181

finde that they will bring vs  
( being exercised with them )  
the quiet fruit of righteous-  
nesse : Wherefoze let vs not  
onely not be discouraged at  
the chastisements of God,  
foz they are in loue ; but ra-  
ther make vse of them foz  
our humilitation, and unfai-  
ned reformation. Adding  
daily and continuall prayers  
vnto God, who smiteth vs ;  
neither to kill vs oꝛ to maim  
vs, but onely to keepe vs in  
awe, hauing a speciall eye  
vnto his hand : foz, when we  
intend oꝛ are committing of  
any fir.ne against God let vs  
do as schollers do, who when  
they are in their unhappi-  
nesse, haue one eie ( as it  
were )

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were) to ſee whether the ma-  
ſter obserueth them or no,  
and ſhould giue them a clap  
beſoze they were aware: We  
are to be as wary of the hand  
of God, and as the maiden  
of the hand of her miſtriſſe;  
ſo ſhall God hearken vnto  
our voice when we cry, he  
will haue mercy alſo vpon  
vs, and heare vs.

*A Praier, that God will haue  
mercy vpon vs and heare vs.*

**H**Aue mercy vpon me, O  
God, haue mercy vpon  
me, for my ſoule truſteth in  
thee, and in the ſhadow of  
thy

Dauid's resolution. 133

thy wings will I trust, vntill  
mine afflictions come to an  
end. I will call vpon thee, O  
*hearken vnto my voice when I  
cry vnto thee, haue mercy also  
vpon me, and heare me;* But  
how canst thou heare, vnlesse  
I speake? Yes, Lord, I know  
that thou hearest the very si-  
lent sighes and groantes of the  
faithfull heart. As for my vo-  
call voice, it is but the voice  
of a sinfull man, but an out-  
ward voice that soundeth but  
in the aire, it only entreth into  
the eares of man and beasts,  
passing thorow the throat,  
and soundeth by the lips, a  
voice of no force, to pierce  
the skies, to sound through  
the clouds, to mount the hea-  
uens;

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uens; it is a low voice, a weake voice; it ascendeth not where thou, my louing God fittest, in the heauen of heauens: and therefore how can it procure thine attention any thing at all? Why then should I say vnto thee, hearken? Why did *Dauid* say vnto thee, hearken? He was assured to bee heard: Therefore I pray thee hearken, O my God, *Hearken vnto the voice of my cry, haue mercy also vpon me and heare me.* Heare the voice of my renewed heart, the voice of my soule that sigheth for my sinnes: haue mercy therefore vpon me, O Lord, and pardon me, that I may so cry, and it may please thee so to  
heare,

*Dauids resolution.* 185

heare, as I may heare thine answer within, as I cry within. Lord, let thy holy Spirit both speake to thee, and answer me: for I cannot preuailingly cry vnto thee, vnlesse thou cry in me by thine owne Spirit, sanctifying my spirit, and answering my spirit again by thy spirit. Harken, euen vnto thy selfe, speaking in me; and let my spirit heare thy spirit, speaking to me, and in mee. So shall my soule sound forth a glorious voice, a sharpe and piercing voice, a voice whose sound shall ascend aboue the clouds, where I haue a most louing and preuailing Mediator with thee, euen Iesus Christ the righteous: in  
whose

whose name, and for whose sake, thou wilt deny nothing vnto those that come and cry faithfully vnto thee. Then I, euen I, shall heare a most sweet and comfortable Eccho of Grace resound in the eares of my soule, that shall assure me of answer of euey my petitions.

When I cry, *Lord forgive me my sinnes*, I shall heare, *Thy sinnes, O man, are forgiven thee*: when I shall say, *Open thou my lips*, I shall heare, *Open thy mouth, and I will fill it*: When I shall say, *Lord I beleue*, I shall heare, *Thou beleenedst, therefore shalt thou be saved*: When I call for strength in my tentations, I shall heare,

*My*

Dauids resolution. 187

*My grace is sufficient for thee:*  
When I shall call vnto thee in  
my necessities for helpe, I shall  
heare, *I will neuer faile thee,*  
*nor forsake thee.* This is thy  
goodnelle, O Lord, and thy  
mercy, therefore will I euer-  
more pray vnto thee: O hear-  
ken vnto my voice, when I  
cry vnto thee, haue mercy al-  
so vpon me, and heare me.

The ground of all my com-  
forts in all my troubles to bee  
eased, is thy mercy; yea, thy  
mercy onely. In mee there is  
nothing worthy to bee regar-  
ded of thee, it is thy mercy  
only that maketh me to dwell  
in safetie: And had it not  
beene of thy free mercy, I had  
bin confounded long agoe;  
there.

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therefore in thy mercy heare me when I call vpon thee, and in thy mercy releue mee, in thy mercy helpe mee. Then shall neither enemies preuaile against me, pouertie and want shall not ouer-much oppresse me, sicknesse shall not dismay me, nor any outward or inward trouble, sinne nor Satan preuaile against me: For thou, O God, art the God of my saluation, my glory, the God of my strength, in thee will I euer trust. So be it.



VERSE

WH  
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saic  
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Thy  
At f

VERSE 8.

When thou saidst, seeke yee  
my face, mine heart answered  
vnto thee, O Lord, I  
will seeke thy face.

**I**n this verse, there  
is (as it were) a  
familiar conference betwene  
the Lord and Dauid: God  
saies vnto Dauid, and in the  
plurall number, to all that  
are his, Seeke yee my face;  
And Dauid againe in the  
name of the faithfull replies,  
Thy face, O Lord, will I seeke.  
It seemeth to be a strange  
com

command, that we weake  
Creatures that cannot looke  
with stedfast eies vpon the  
Sun, that is but one of his  
inferior Creatures, but shall  
be stricken blinde with the ra-  
diant beames thereof, should  
seeke and behold his face,  
which none could euer see  
and liue. And it seemeth like-  
wise to be as strange a pro-  
mise in Dauid, to say that he  
would seeke the face of God.  
To seeke the Lord, is in ma-  
ny places of Scripture en-  
ioyned vs: but to seeke and  
to see his face, is not so fre-  
quently commanded. But  
these phrases of speech differ  
not, for both signifie the seek-  
ing of his helpe, and are not  
literally

literally to be vnderstood, as if God had a visible face to be seene; or that he had a cor- porall being to be felt. God is a spirit, and spiritually to be sought, and spiritually to be discerned, and is not otherwise to be seene, but in the face of Iesus Christ, who is also now glorified in the heauens, not visibly to bee apprehended by vs, vntill his second coming.

What is then meant by the seeking of the face of God: onely his fauour and his protection in the time of our danger: And to seeke God, is to imploze his power, prouidence, and helpe in our afflictions: As Ieremiah  
comfoz

192 The Imitation of  
comforting the captive Isra-  
elites in Babylon: You shall  
goe and pray vnto me, (saith  
God) and I will heare you,  
and if you seeke me, yee shall  
finde me, if you seeke me with  
all your hearts. And againe,  
Azariah, said to Asa, Iuda and  
Beniamin, The Lord is with  
you while yee be with him:  
And if yee seeke him, he will  
be found of you; but if yee  
forsake him, hee will forsake  
you. God is present with  
the faithfull by his continu-  
all helping power, as long as  
they hold him fast by their  
prayers, and wrestle with  
him with their faithfull peti-  
tions, as Iacob did with the  
Angell, and cry vnto him till  
he

he answer, and neuer leaue  
seeking of him, till hee finde  
him. If we seeke him in the  
World, we shall finde him  
there, as the spirit hath de-  
scribed him, both a mercifull  
God, and a consuming fire.  
The faithfull finde him mer-  
cifull, even in this life: the  
wicked shall finde him a se-  
uere Judge hereafter. The  
first shall see his face, and re-  
ioyce: the second shall see his  
face, and tremble. The first  
shall see, and behold the beau-  
ty of his countenance with  
great gladnesse for ever: the  
second shall see his face for a  
moment in his last sentence,  
and that with horroz.

God saies vnto all, Seeke

L

ye

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yee my face, but few with  
their hearts doe seeke him:  
And that is the reason that  
many call vpon him and are  
not heard; they seeme to seeke  
him, and finde him not: but  
vnto the truly faithfull, hee  
offereth himselfe as he did to  
Moses; My presence shall goe  
with thee, and I will give thee  
rest. This is the true behold-  
ing of the face of God, to en-  
ioy his presence; namely,  
when he is ready in his pow-  
er and providence to helpe  
vs in our afflictions, and to  
deliuer vs in our dangers;  
any other presence of his in  
this life we neede not seeke,  
his glory is above the hea-  
uens: What is man then  
that

*Dauids resolution.* 195

that he should seeke to see his  
all-glorious face here in  
earth, which Moses saw but  
in a bush obscurely, in respect  
of his full and compleat glo-  
ry; and yet with that sight  
his face did shine so, as the  
people could not abide the  
glory of his face: How much  
lesse, the glory of the most un-  
speakable beauty of the face of  
the most high: whose dwelling  
is in the heavens, and whose  
power is over all his works  
in heaven and earth: And  
therefore saith David; O  
Lord our God, how excellent  
is thy name in all the world,  
which hast set thy glory above  
the heavens, where he sitteth  
and seeth the troubles and af-

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afflictions of his, and is nere  
them when they call vpon  
him, he turneth his face and  
louing countenance towards  
them, to cheare them and  
comfort them; as for the  
wicked, he beholdeth them a  
farre off. I haue set the Lord  
(saith Dauid) alwaies before  
me, for he is at my right hand,  
therefore I shall not slide: As  
if he had said, I see the face  
of God continually: and hee  
it is that preserveth me from  
danger; so that mine heart  
is glad, and my tongue reioy-  
ceeth, my flesh also doth rest  
in hope. The tongue of men  
or Angels cannot sufficient-  
ly expresse what God is: one-  
ly the heavens doe shew vn-  
to

*Dauids resolution. 197*

to vs his glory, the Sunne,  
the Moone, and Starres fixed  
in the Firmament, the  
Earth, the Sea, and all that  
are therein, all being the  
works of his hands. This  
God did David seeke, to this  
God did David pray, and hee  
turned his face vnto him,  
and deliuered him out of all  
his feare : To him I will  
pray.

*A Prayer that God will neuer  
hide his face from vs.*

**T**HY fauour, O Lord,  
which thou shewest vnto  
vs, weake and vnworthy crea-  
tures,

198 The Imitation of

tures, is as an vnfathomable Sea of loue, who becommest (as it were) a futer vnto vs to come to seeke and to see thy face: Thou the most beloued seemest to make loue vnto vs: Thou the most mighty creator callest vs vnto thee thy weake creatures; And shall we, harefull, deformed, and vile wretches, stand therefore in conceit, that wee are louely and beautifull, because thou, great *Iehonab*, absolute in all perfection, doest thus intreat vs? Thou saiest, *Seake my face*; And what is it, but as if thou saidst, *Come and see me, come and receiue me, come and dwell with me*. It seemeth to be rather the voice of a familiar friend,

*Dauids resolution.* 179

friend, than of the Creator of  
heaven and earth.

But when I consider thy  
greatnesse, thy Maiesty, and  
glory, thy power and omni-  
potency, I cannot but feare,  
considering what I am, and  
rather desire to hide me from  
thee as *Adam* did, than to in-  
trude my selfe into thy pre-  
sence in my deformities, and  
to cover my nakednesse of all  
goodnesse, with the fig leaues  
of shamefull absence, than to  
come into thy presence, being  
naked of all spirituall vertues.

Should I come into thy  
presence, O most powerfull  
and holy Lord God, in the  
bespotted garments of mine  
owne corruptions? Then

L 4

maist

240 The Imitation of  
maist thou well stand with the  
burning sword of thy fury, to  
keepe me from the sweet Pa-  
radice of thy louing and amia-  
ble presence: amiable in deed  
to them whom thou makest  
worthy, but most fearefull  
vnto such as haue not on the  
wedding garment of the  
righteousnesse of I E S V S  
CHRIST. If thou obserue  
the selfe-deseruings of the best  
men, and deale with them  
accordingly, who can see thy  
face and liue? Who dare to  
seeke thy face as of himselfe  
worthy?

But sith it pleaseth thee to  
call me, though vnworthy,  
and to accept me as worthy;  
how can I but giue all dili-  
gence

*Dauids resolution.* 201

gence to attend thy call?  
Should I stand consulting  
with flesh and bloud, whe-  
ther I should seeke thy face  
and liue; or remaine out of  
thy fauour, and perish eter-  
nally?

Thou saist, *Seeke my face:*  
O that my heart could truly  
answer and faithfully per-  
forme the seeking of thy face;  
for I cannot say, of my owne  
power, I will seeke thy face:  
Though my spirituall part bee  
willing, my carnall part is  
weake. I desire yet to seeke  
and to finde thee; for with  
thee is the well of life: Thine  
eyes are vpon them that feare  
thee, and thine eares open vn-  
to their cry. Shew me there-

The Imitation of  
fore the light of thy counte-  
nance, and turne thy face to-  
wards me that I may see it, in  
thy fauour and louing kind-  
nesse.

Thy face is no way so liue-  
ly to be scene, as in the Image  
of thy Sonne, who although  
he were here in the earth in  
the forme of a seruant, he had  
the inuisible forme of thine  
owne Essence; and is now as-  
cended and glorified in the  
heauens, endowed with that  
absolute glory which hee had  
from the beginning with  
thee, whose visible forme  
cannot bee scene with mortall  
eyes, whose face yet shineth  
more gloriously than it did  
vpon the holy Mount, which

*Peter,*

*Dauids resolution.* 203

*Peter, James and Iohn*, to their vnſpeakable comfort, beheld with their eies, that viſible glory of his cannot bee here ſcene, it is hid from vs vn- all the time, but he vouch- ſafeth vnto vs his Word, wherein we ſee him through faith.

O ſeeke his face euermore my ſoule, ſeeke his Word, be- lieue his promiſes, obſerue his Will. Grant Lord that I may ſlie ſinne and embrace rightcouſneſſe; that I may pray continually, loue all men, beare with the weake, bee patient in troubles, and thankfull vnto thee for all thy mercies, and grant Lord that I may ſeeke thee while it is to day,

204 The Imitation of.

day, let mee omit no time  
in seeking thy face: thou saist,  
Seeke my face; let me cast off  
all impediments and clogs  
of worldly occasions, and cast  
my care vpon thee, for thou  
hast promised to care for  
mee: what thou hast said  
is true, what thou hast pro-  
mised is Yea and Amen; as  
sure as if I were possessed of  
what I aske.

I am in danger, I will  
seeke thy face as *David* did,  
who found it in the Wilder-  
nesse pursued by *Saul*. I haue  
enemies, I will seeke thy face  
as *Eliab* did, being threatened  
by *Iezabel*. If I bee in pri-  
son, I will seeke thy face as  
*Ioseph* did, who was deliuered  
and

*Dauids resolution.* 205

and aduanced: what misery  
or danger, trouble or affliction  
soeuer it shall please thee  
to inflict vpon mee, I will  
seeke thy face, so shall I not  
bee confounded in the peri-  
lous time; and in whatsoeuer  
calamity I am, be thou neere  
vnto me and saue me.

VERSE

PSALM. LXXV. VERSE 9.

VERSE 9.

Hide not thy face from mee,  
nor cast thy seruanc away  
in displeasure; thou hast  
beene my succour, leaue  
me not, neither forsake me  
O God of my saluation.

**I**n this prayer of Da-  
uid it may appeare  
that God some-  
times hideth his  
face from his dearest chil-  
dren, and seemeth as if he  
had cast them away in his  
anger, which yet though it  
be fearefull, it is not small,  
for he continueth not long in  
his

*Dauids resolution.* 207

his displeasure; though the weaknesse of men (bee they neuer so sanctified) will many times shew it selfe, and produce such corrupt fruits as may incense God to displeasure, and inforce him to absent himselfe from them for a time, in so much as he may seeme to haue left them quite to their owne corrupt wills, as it seemeth holy David felt some alteration as it were of Gods dealing towards him, that he cried out, hide not thy face from me, wherby it seemeth David had not that comfort of Gods presence as in times past he had, especially when he was afraid that God had cast him

208 The Imitation of  
him away in displeasure. It  
may be the weaknesse of Da-  
uids faith, (which is not at  
all times alike strong) could  
not so well apprehend Gods  
mercies as before, or that he  
felt his owne infirmities to  
grow stronger, and his spi-  
rituall powers weaker, so  
that in the combat betwixt  
the flesh and spirit, he found  
his inward part the weaker,  
and so suspecting as it were  
the loue and presence of  
God to aid the one and to  
suppresse the other, hee  
thought God had left him.

But it seemeth his out-  
ward enemies did more pre-  
uaile against him than be-  
fore, and being so oppressed  
by

by them or afraid of them, he  
turned himselfe vnto God,  
but he seemed to hide his face  
from him, and therefore  
prayed so instantly that God  
would not cast him away be-  
ing his servant, in displea-  
sure: yet David had the true  
feare of God in his heart, al-  
though he were a little sha-  
ken with doubting so; the ab-  
sence of Gods presence; and  
necessary it is, that wee  
should sometimes feele the  
want of Gods presence with  
vs, that wee should not too  
much presume vpon our  
owne worthinesse, power  
and strength, to stand firme  
without him, so; if he leaue  
vs, be it neuer so little, such  
is

310 The Imitation of  
is our frailty, that we begin  
to faint, and our spirituall  
strength faileth vs, which  
if we can apprehend, it is an  
argument that we are not al-  
together destitute of the  
grace of God, for if we be so  
carried away with our owne  
corruptions as we neuer seele  
our owne wants of spirituall  
graces, we haue no grace at  
all. The wicked and such as  
sinne without touch of con-  
science, they neuer seele the  
want of that they neuer had,  
the spirit of God, & therefore  
run on stil in their impieties,  
following every kinde of car-  
nall desires with greedinesse.  
It is not so with them that  
God hath chosen and enligh-  
tened,

*Dauids resolution.* 211

tened, so they finde in themselves the least of Gods absence if but for a moment, so they are seldome idle in one kinde of holy duty or another; they either meditate on the word and works of God, they pray or offer the sacrifice of thanks to God, and when they finde in themselves a dullness to pray, or ignorance how to pray, they presently suspect that they have deserved by some finnes that God hath left them to themselves, who of their owne power without the helpe of the Spirit of God cannot thinke a good thought, much lesse faithfully and seruenly pray vnto him,

212 The Imitation of

him, and then feeling the  
griefe of their hearts that  
they cannot be comforted by  
the exercise of these holy du-  
ties, finde the fault to bee in  
themselves, and that God  
for some sinne committed, or  
some good dutie omitted, is  
angrie with them. And there-  
fore, as Dauid doth here,  
they cry out vnto God, O  
hide not thy face from me, nor  
cast thy seruant away in dis-  
pleasure. So fearefull are the  
children of God, to lose the  
benefit of his presence, as  
they thinke nothing so irk-  
some vnto them as his ab-  
sence; and therefore haue al-  
waies a kinde of holy iea-  
louſie, that the least sinne they  
doe

doe commit, wil cause the Lord  
to hide himselfe from them.  
Therefore when David con-  
sidered his infirmitie, hee  
could confesse and say, Wic-  
ked deeds haue preuailed a-  
gainst me, but thou wilt bee  
mercifull vnto my sinne. God  
is mercifull to them that are  
sory for their sinnes, which  
sorrow and repentance is  
the gift of God, and the chil-  
dren of God instantly and  
often call to God for it, as a  
meane whereby they may re-  
deeme his loue and obtaine  
his presence, and the beauty  
of his face againe. And there-  
fore saith David, being as it  
were forsaken, and had lost  
his chiefe comfort, the lo-  
uing

214 The Imitation of  
uing countenance of the  
Lord. Turne vs againe, O  
Lord God of hosts (saith he)  
cause thy face to shine, and we  
shall be safe: Returne wee be-  
seech thee, O God of hosts,  
looke downe from Heauen  
and visit vs againe with  
the brightnesse of thy lo-  
uing countenance, and hide  
not thy face from vs, nor  
cast vs away in displeasure.  
There is nothing more cau-  
seth the Spirit of God to  
leave vs than our sinnes, and  
neglect of the true service of  
God, and nothing retaineth  
him more than the continu-  
all meditation of heavenly  
things, Perseuer prayer with  
a godly life; he that thus ex-  
erciseth

*Dauids resolution.* 215

exerciseth himselfe, hath God  
alwaies with him, he hideth  
not his face from such; but  
in what misery, trouble,  
feare or affliction they are,  
they are sure either to re-  
ceiue outward deliuerance or  
inward comfort, and to say  
with Dauid, yet my soule kee-  
peth silence vnto God, of him  
commeth my saluation; yet he  
is my strength & my defence,  
therefore shall I not much be  
moued; not much, we may  
haue some doubtings in our  
heauy afflictions, and cry out  
with Dauid, O God why hast  
thou forsaken me; and though  
we be moued, we shall neuer  
be remoued from the louing  
sanour of God; we shall ne-  
uer

uer fall finally into his dis-  
 pleasure, though so; a time  
 he seeme to hide his face from  
 vs, which he neuer doth vn-  
 till we couet to hide our sins  
 from him, and to doe the  
 things which we thinke he  
 saith not; we may not thinke  
 that God hideth his ali-  
 sing cies from our transgres-  
 sions, though he turne not  
 his face towards vs to flat-  
 ter vs (as it were) in our  
 sinnes, so; he loueth righte-  
 ousnesse and hateth iniqui-  
 ty; righteousness and equi-  
 ty are the establishment of his  
 throne, therefore dealeth he  
 iustly when he hideth his face  
 from them that deale vniust-  
 ly, from them that obey him  
 not,

not, from them that neglect  
to call vpon him in faith,  
and omit those holy duties  
which he requireth. How can  
hee looke vpon them in loue  
that leaue him? How can he  
but hide his face, and as it  
were, cast them away in his  
displeasure that neuer seeke  
him or serue him? Say, that  
seeke him not with a pure  
heart, and that continually:  
for it is not enough to sinne  
and serue him by turnes, as  
if he allowed vs a time for  
our selues to take our car-  
nall pleasures & delights in,  
and a time againe for him, to  
haue our times wherein we  
cannot sinne, either being  
glutted with sinne, or vnable

218 The Imitation of  
to sinne. How can hee but  
hide his face from such:  
How can it be, but he must  
cast away such in his dis-  
pleasure? David that thus  
crieth out, that God had hid  
his face from him, neuer  
tooke such prophane liberty,  
and yet through his humane  
frailty, felt, and that grie-  
uously: but he lay not in it  
as the reprobate doe; he exa-  
mined his heart, and found it  
corrupt, and salted it with  
the teares of repentance:  
Thou hast fed mee with the  
bread of teares (saith he) and  
given mee teares to drinke.  
This is the true medicine to  
cure the soule that hath sin-  
ned, Faith and Repentance.

And

And who so applieth it truly to himselfe, as David did, shall finde ease; and although God seme sometimes to hide his face, it is but to cause vs the moze to seeke it, and though he seme to cast vs off in displeasure, it is but as a louing father that dissembleth extreme anger to his childe that hath offended him, and maketh a shew as if he will vtterly cast him off, determining yet nothing lesse. So though God the most louing father to his children seme often angry with vs, as he seemed to bee with David, it was more in shew than in deed (which we may not slightly regard, for

220 The Imitation of

so we may indeed turne his  
fatherly displeasure into iust  
revenge) let vs obserue in  
wisdom the Lords waies,  
how indeed he neuer winketh  
long at our least sinne, for  
many little sinnes make a  
great cry, and when God  
heareth their clamour he  
turneth away his face as a  
thing loathsome vnto him, as  
he did from Dauid for a time,  
who feeling it, ranne crying  
again vnto God: O hide  
not thy face from me, O Lord  
nor cast thy seruant away in  
displeasure.

Thou hast beene my suc-  
cour (saith Dauid) leaue mee  
not, neither forsake mee O  
God of my saluation: though  
Dauid

*Dauids resolution.* 221

David found that God had hid his face from him, and seemed displeased with him, yet he took a godly courage through faith, to put God in minde of his former favours towards him, saying, Thou hast beene my succour, and thou changeest not, thou art still the same, and whom thou hast once chosen, thou neuer forsakest. He may be angry with his dearest child, for a time, but he endureth not long in his displeasure: but when he with rebukes doth chastise a man for his sinne, his beauty consumeth, and all carnall delights are as it were irkesome unto him in respect of

the

222 The Imitation of  
the losse of Gods fauour.

Though David seemed much to bee troubled that God did hide his face from him, and to withhold his helping hand against his enemies, yet he had hope to recover his fauour againe, because he was before his succour, which no doubt hee in his heart acknowledged, not to proceed of his owne deserting, but of the more and free mercy of God. And therefore as hee first freely chose him without his desert, he would not cast him off in regard of his humane frailties, incident to all men, euen to the best men; but would rather renew, maintaine and confirm

firm those diuine graces  
which it had pleased God be-  
fore to plant in him, and so  
would returne againe vnto  
him in loue, and turne his  
face towards him againe, and  
not utterly to leaue him nor  
forsake him; and why? be-  
cause he was assured, that as  
God had promised to be, so  
he was, and would be, the  
God of his saluation for euer:  
so he neuer faileth the per-  
formance of his promises to  
a thousand generations. And  
his gifts and callings are  
without repentance. There-  
fore if we be chosen of God,  
we cleaue vnto God; if we  
cleaue vnto God, God is  
faithfull to succour vs, & will

124 The Imitation of

neuer leaue vs no; for sake vs.

Though he seeme to hide his face from vs a little, as he did from David, and to be displeased with vs as he seemed to be with him, we may with like boldnesse build our assurance of his future helpe, as David did, by his former succouring of vs: And as David held it as an argument of Gods neuer failing help, in that hee was once his succour; how much moze may such as haue often found him their defence and succour assure themselves, that though he hide his face for a while, he will neuer faile them no; for sake them: But that he will establish his according to his promise.

David's resolution. 225

promise, & they may yet live,  
& not be disappointed of his  
louing fauour again: howso-  
euer they seeme to be forsak-  
en, Hee that trusteth in the  
Lord, mercy shall compasse  
him about on euery side.

*A Prayer that God will be al-  
waies neere vnto vs in our  
afflictions, and not to hide his  
face and fauour from vs.*

**O** Lord, hide not thy face  
from me, and cast mee  
not away in thy displeasure.  
Thou diddest not in the be-  
ginning choose mee for my  
worthinesse, O cast me not off

M 5

for

226 The Imitation of  
for my weaknesse; thou knew-  
est before whereof I was  
made, and that in me neither  
was nor is any goodnesse at  
all: and therefore if thou  
shouldest hide thy face from  
me, I could not iustly accuse  
thee of leuity or lightnesse,  
soone to loue, and as soone to  
reiect; but condemne my  
selfe, in that I haue cast away  
thy feare, and haue forgotten  
and neglected thy due praises  
for thy former succour and  
goodnesse towards me.

I haue runne too farre in the  
way of sinne and vanity, by a  
lewd law that is in my mem-  
bers, rebelling against the law  
of thy Spirit, incensing thee  
to displeasure against mee,  
wherein

*Dauids resolution.* 227

wherein thou seemest to hide  
thy face from me, as if thou  
hadst neuer knowne me to be  
one of thine; yet Lord I know  
thee, and doe acknowledge  
that thou hast beene my suc-  
cour, thou hast beene a graci-  
ous God vnto mee; when I  
haue called vpon thee, thou  
hast heard mee; when I haue  
sought thee, thou hast turned  
thy louing countenance to-  
wards me, thou hast not left  
me nor forsaken me, therefore  
Lord forsake me not for euer,  
giue mee not ouer, leaue mee  
not vnto my selfe, but keepe  
mee vnder the shadow of  
thine owne wings, shew me  
the light of thy countenance  
again: and as thou hast beene  
formerly

228 The Imitation of

formerly my succour, leaue me  
not now, nor forsake me, O  
God of my saluation.

If thou turn from me altogether,  
I shall altogether perish.  
Remember that I am thine,  
and the worke of thine owne  
hands, destroy me not there-  
fore o my God, that which thy  
selfe hast made, for there is  
none that can plead or main-  
taine my cause against thee;  
but as sinne hath cast mee  
downe, thy grace can raise  
mee vp: I haue falne through  
frailty, I may rise againe by  
faith in thee: I haue lost the  
view of thine amiable coun-  
tenance, by turning my face  
vnto vanity, I may finde it  
againe if it please thee to  
turne

Dauids resolution. 229

turne me to thee, and thy face  
to me.

I haue beene too negli-  
gent, when thou saidst, *Seeke*  
*my face*, I gaue not such care  
vnto thy words, nor such eye  
vnto the beaury of thy face as  
I ought. But be thou pleased,  
now to be found when I seek  
thee; I pray thee heare mee,  
now I intreat thee: And cast  
mee not away in displea-  
sure, though I haue displeased  
thee. As long as I see thy face  
I am safe; but as soone as thou  
turnest thy face from me, I am  
troubled.

When thou leauest me, I  
am left without spirituall hope  
or helpe, and busie my selfe in  
things that profite not: And  
there-

130 The Imitation of

therefore I cannot but confesse indeed, that thou maiest turne away thy face from me a sinner, but remember then I became a sinner, when thou didst hide thy face from mee: Yet ~~have~~ not I forsaken thee, O God, neither can I goe from thee wheresoeuer I should couer to hide my selfe. No, I will not onely not couer to hide my selfe, but I come euen as *Dauid* to *Saul*, to discover my selfe vnto thee. Alas, to discover my selfe, when I cannot hide my selfe from thee? Though thou mayst hide thy face from me, I cannot hide my waies from thee. No, Lord, I seeke thee, let mee finde thee: Leave  
me

*Dauids resolution.* 231

me nor, nor forsake mee, O  
God of my saluation, nor cast  
me thy poorest and meanest  
seruant away in thy displea-  
sure : But as thou hast euer  
beene my succour, sustaining  
me, releeuing me, defending  
me, and comforting me ; So  
gracious Lord God, in Iesus  
Christ, continue my louing  
and helping father still. And  
then, whatloeuere, or whosoe-  
uer shall rise vp against me, I  
will neither faint nor feare :  
for thou wilt be my succour,  
thou wilt neither faile me nor  
forsake me, O God of my sal-  
uation, Amen.

VERSE

## VERSE 10.

Though my Father and my  
Mother forsake me, thou  
Lord wilt take me vp.

**I**t is impossible  
for man to com-  
prehend the depth  
of Gods vn-  
searchable wisdom, prou-  
dence, and loue towards his  
childzen: his wisdom in dis-  
posing, his prouidence in  
finding out, and his loue in  
bestowing things, both spiri-  
tuall and corporall vpon his  
childzen necessary. In so  
much, as we may admire  
with

with Saint Paul, and say; O the deepnesse of the vnsearchable riches, of the wisdom, prouidence, and loue of God towards vs, who when father, mother, friends, and meanes faile vs, hee taketh charge of vs; we are all cast vpon his prouidence and care, euen as well before, as when we are bozne. And if then father and mother faile vs, or forsake vs, he will take vs to himselfe, as he tooke vp Moses out of the riuer, being cast into it in a basket of reeds in a most desperate danger to be vtterly cast away. Did father or mother preserue him? Was it not the prouidence of God that saued him? Was not

not Ioseph cast into a pit by  
his Brethren, intending he  
should haue there perished?  
Was hee not after sould to  
Merchants, and then as a  
slave, depriued of the aid or  
comfort of father, mother, or  
friends, falsly accused, vn-  
iustly imprisoned? Who  
tooke him into protection?  
Who tooke care of him? Was  
not God alone he that preser-  
ued him?

The prouidence of God  
ouer-ruleth all things that  
fall out in the world, for he  
causeth them all to worke for  
the best, not onely for them  
that are of age to loue him,  
and to pray vnto him, as  
Dauid did, but euen vnto In-  
fants;

*Dauids resolution.* 235

sants; as vnto Moses when  
he was a childe, preserving  
him beyond the expectation  
of his owne Parents. It  
worketh also all troubles,  
crosses, and afflictions, to the  
good of his. There is none  
so young, nor any so old, but  
God disposeth of them; yea,  
when they haue neither fa-  
ther nor mother, or friend to  
helpe them, hee then comes  
and takes them into his owne  
guard and keeping, bee they  
neuer so base and vile in  
mans corrupt iudgement; he  
can make them honozable, be  
they neuer so abiect and de-  
spised, either for birth, or  
poore estate, he is all one to  
all: he respecteth no degree.

Though

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Though he dwell in the hea-  
uens, farre aboue our apper-  
hension, yet he beholdeth all  
his creatures, and knoweth  
them; he can see through the  
Clouds, and behold all the  
things on earth: He is good  
to all, and his mercies are ouer  
all his workes: He vpholderh  
all that fall, and liftech vp all  
that are ready to fall.

When a man loseth father  
and mother, being left naked  
and destitute of helpe, is it  
not a great tentation? When  
he knowes not which way, or  
to whom to turne for reliefe;  
What a comfort is it then,  
which the holy spirit hath  
here recorded of the proui-  
dence and loue of God, who  
hath

hath promised, that when we are depriued of all earthly meanes, he will be a father and mother vnto vs?

Children commonly in their young yeres, care for no prouision, for food or maintenance, but relie onely vpon their parents: So the Children of God, howsoeuer old they are, yet vnable of themselves to prouide things necessary without their heavenly fathers helpe: And therefore as the young birds hang at the bill of the old for food; so doe Gods children depend vpon God for all that they need, and he doth nourish them. He is in stead of their naturall father and mother;

238 The Imitation of

ther; nay, fathers and mothers may haue a good desire to prouide for their children, but want the meanes; but our heavenly father wanteth none. To come to preferment (nay to bee supplied with things necessary) is neither from the East nor from the West (saith David) nor from the South: But God is the Iudge, he maketh low, and he maketh high.

What a strange kinde of care then is it in many Parents, that setting God (as it were) aside, his prouidence and care; and onely study how they may aduance their children to greatnesse after their deaths? As, if when they

they can see them richly provided for, it is sufficient; riches, lands, and reuenues, are in stead of father and mother, and of Gods prouidence also: And yet if these men were not wilfully blinde, or rather besotted (whether more with the fond loue of their children, or foolish desire of vaine-glozy, I cannot tell) they might obserue more (poore) cast, and depending vpon the prouidence of God, by religious endeouors to liue more contentedly with their little, than many leſt rich with their plentie: and more from meane beginnings to rise to greatnesse, than in hereditary greatnesse, to gaine glozy

240 The Imitation of  
glozy and continuance.

Let them then that are in  
a meane estate, wanting fa-  
ther and mother, which im-  
ply all worldly meanes, take  
comfort and courage in this;  
That God to the faithfull is  
in stead of al helps; and if our  
naturall fathers that begat  
vs, our naturall mothers  
that bare vs, our friends  
that professed friendship to  
vs, and the meanes that we  
had to sustaine vs, faile all;  
let vs not feare, for the  
Lord of heauen and earth,  
and the owner and disposer  
of all things within the same,  
hath giuen vs a promise to be  
a father vnto vs, if a father,  
he will loue vs, if he loue vs,  
vs

Dauid resolution. 241

he will not see vs want any  
thing that is fit and necessary  
fo: vs.

Though then our eyes faile  
vs, our feet falter vnder vs,  
our hands be helplesse to vs,  
though our limbs become  
wrake; though we haue nei-  
ther Gold, no: Siluer, no:  
food, no: raiment, no: friend,  
no: helper, but our ancient  
friends and companions to  
deride vs fo: our basenesse,  
enemies to rage and raile a-  
gainst vs fo: our pozenesse:  
let vs not dismay no: fall  
from our faith and assurance  
in God; he is our father, let  
vs retorne vnto him though  
as Prodigalls, he will enter-  
taine vs into his house, not

as

as

241 The Imitation of  
as servants but as sonnes.  
Hee will regard vs as his  
sonnes, pꝛouide foꝛ vs as his  
sonnes, and defend vs as his  
sonnes; and in stead of our  
naturall father he will be our  
heauenly father, hee will  
bꝛing vs vp, and we shall  
want nothing that is good,  
though hee saꝓe here to ex-  
pose vs to be as Apprentises  
foꝛ a time in the world, to  
learne to beare the Crosse of  
Christ; it is but seuen  
yeres, be it seuentp, hee in  
the end will make vs free  
men of the City, new Ieru-  
salem, where we shall worke  
no moꝛe in our foꝛmer trade  
of life, but in stead of all the  
miseries and troubles we  
here

*Dauids resolution.* 243

here endure, wee shall haue  
peace, and rest, and glory for  
euermore.

Therefore in the meane  
time, while we shall liue as  
the worlds slaues here, let vs  
vndergoe it with patience, it  
is but a little while: If we  
want any thing for soule or  
body, hee willethe vs to tell  
him and hee will supply it;  
If any wrong vs or abuse  
vs, to complaine to him and  
he will redresse it. If we bee  
sicke, he knoweth our disea-  
ses; he is our Physician, and  
knoweth whether life or  
death be fittest for vs. If we  
die, he will restore vs to life  
eternall, therefore may wee  
freely cast our care vpon him,

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for hee careth for vs.

Fathers (saith Salomon)  
are the glory of their children.  
How much more shall the  
God of all glory, our heauenly  
Father, be a glory to vs  
his children: who hath pro-  
vided for vs an inheritance,  
which no man can deprive vs  
of, yea a Kingdome whose  
glory shall haue no end. The  
remembrance of our future  
enjoying it, is as a most deere  
Dea of comfort in this infe-  
riour Kingdome of crosses.  
It cannot bee sadomed with  
the line of mans capacity;  
what hee hath promised hee  
will performe for his chil-  
dren, therefore may we stand  
assured and boldly asseme,  
that

*Dauids resolution.* 245

that though the fathers and mothers of the faithfull doe forsake them, that God will take charge of them.

*A Prayer that God will shew himselfe our father in all our troubles and afflictions when all other helpe faileth.*

**O** Gracious Lord God, most mercifull and loving Father, from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift, and who of thine owne will hast begotten vs with the Word of truth; shew thy selfe a father vnto mee who am deprived of father

N 3

and

246 The Imitation of  
and mother, from all helpe  
and comfort in this life, beset  
on all sides with troubles,  
dangers and many afflictions,  
relying only vpon thy prouidence;  
shew thy selfe vnto me  
a father, a powerfull and protecting  
father, as thou diddest  
vnto *Ioseph*, who being de-  
riued of father and mother, ha-  
ted of his brethren, sold as a  
slave, falsely accused, sharply  
imprisoned, hauing none to  
helpe him or to comfort him,  
forsaken of all his friends; yet  
when all helpe failed, thou  
tookest him into thy protection,  
and directedst him in thy  
waies, he became louing vnto  
thee as a sonne, obedient vnto  
thee as a seruant, he waited on  
thee

thee as vpon a most faithfull  
father, hee called vpon thee  
and thou heardest him, and  
gauest him the honour of a  
sonne, euen in this life holi-  
nesse and honour; testifying  
vnto him that thou his father  
hadst a respect vnto his faith,  
constancy and wrongs, neuer  
leauing him nor forsaking  
him; to teach vs, O Lord, faith-  
fully to depend vpon thy mer-  
cy, power and prouidence, in  
whatsoeuer danger.

I was left vnto thee as soone  
as I was borne, and thou like  
a most louing father tookest  
me vp & hast hitherunto kept  
me: O forsake mee not, for  
if thou my father leaue me and  
forsake mee, who will or can

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take charge of me: I am many waies afflicted and full of sorrow, not so much for my troubles as for that I haue sinned and offended thee so louing a God as thou hast bene vnto me euer vnto this day: but now louing Father, I seeme destitute of thy fauour, of thy releuing hand; I am heuily oppressed, and what I endure is not hid from thee, and thou onely knowest how to releue me; my father, my mother, and all my friends haue forsaken me, *David* being thus destitute, he resorted vnto thee, confessing that when his father and his mother forsooke him, thou tookest him vp; and is thy father-

*Dauids resolution.* 249

ly affection *dead* and discontinued in *Dauid*? No, no, loving art thou still, powerfull art thou still, and helpfull art thou still, for thy faithfulness, and thy truth, and thy power, and thy providence are for ever: and happy, yea most happy is he that hath thee his relieuing and helping father; for nothing is wanting to him that is thus cast vpon thee: He hath not only the promise but the assurance of thy presence and loue both in this life and the life to come.

Yet gracious Father, among all men it goeth hardest with thine owne children, often troubled, much abused, deeply distressed, falsly accused,

N 5

scorning

The Imitation of  
 scoffingly derided, and many  
 crosses, cruell calamities, and  
 great afflictions follow them;  
 & I am enforced to vndergoe  
 the burthen of infinite trialls,  
 as if thou hadst not onely not  
 taken mee vp, but vtterly  
 cast mee off: And were it not  
 that I truly know thee to bee  
 my father, in that thou so fa-  
 therly, yet sharply correctest  
 me, I could not but faint: but  
 thy grace sustaineth mee, and  
 doth inwardly comfort mee,  
 else should I vtterly despaire.

O my father, take mee into  
 thy protection, leaue me not,  
 forsake mee not, for I am  
 brought very low, and there  
 is none that careth for mee,  
 there is none willing to adde  
 any

*Dauids resolution.* 251

any comfort but sorrow vnto  
my soule; there is neither fa-  
ther nor mother, neither  
friend nor helper to commi-  
serate mine estate, but thou  
whom I only trust, for thy pro-  
mises tend to mine encourage-  
ment, to cast my care vpon  
thee, who hast willed all that  
are oppressed to come to thee  
and be eased: But Lord what  
booteth it mee to seeke thee  
when I cannot finde thee?  
to pray vnto thee when thou  
seemest to refuse to heare me?  
Haue I so deeply offended  
thee, that neither my repen-  
tance can pacifie thee? the  
mediation of thy Sonne re-  
concile thee? nor my faith-  
full prayers preuaile with  
thee?

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thee? Is thy mercy come to  
an end? Hast thou no more  
blessings for thy children?

O wretch that I am, Why  
doe I thus reason with thee?  
am I able to ouer-rule thee  
with my words? Shall I teach  
thee what thou shouldst doe?  
No Lord, I only bewray mine  
ignorance by my words,  
which can no further preuaile  
with thee, than thou in thy  
wisdom and mercy thickest  
fit for mee. Therefore will I  
close my lips, I will keepe  
silence, and wait both thy plea-  
sure and leisure, for thou hast  
a time to be angry, and a time  
to bee pacified. I will rest  
with patience, and commit  
my selfe vnto thee in obedi-  
ence,

Dauid's resolution. 253

ence, and if thou lay a greater  
burthen vpon mee then yet I  
beare, if thou suffer mee to  
sinke and to bee cleane over-  
whelmed with more bitter  
waters than yet I feele, I will  
yet trust in thee though my  
body perish, and all outward  
helpe faile mee, preserue my  
soule O Lord, for thou art the  
father of it, and respectest it  
farre above my carnall part;  
yet both make but one body,  
yet may the one prosper when  
the other may perish. But I  
know that such is thy care of  
both, that rather than thou  
wilt permit me utterly to bee  
confounded, thou wilt euen  
send from Heauen and saue  
me. Be it vnto me euen as thou  
wilt,

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wilt, O God, my strength and  
my saluation.

VERSE II.

Teach mee thy way, O Lord,  
and lead me in a right path,  
because of mine enemies.

**I**s the proper-  
ty of an enemy  
to be alwaies  
pying into the  
life of him he  
hates, and to obserue what  
soeuer faults he doth com-  
mit (though he himselfe be  
guilty of moze) and to pub-  
lish and proclaime them to  
the world to his vttermost  
disgrace.

disgrace. And therefore it be-  
hoveth all men, especially a  
man that hath enemies (as  
David had) to looke unto his  
waies, lest by the errors of  
his life they take advantage,  
and so make his cause (other-  
wise good) seeme the worst,  
though his errors no way  
concerne the matter in con-  
trouersie betwene them, but  
merely his frailty; falling as  
a naturall man, whereas  
David being afraid, he pray-  
eth unto God that he would  
teach him his way which is  
incorrupt, and to leade him  
in an vpight path; not onely  
in his ordinary calling, but  
in the sincerity of his religi-  
on and profession, lest his  
enemies

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enemies that are alwaies watchfull should haue cause to accuse him of some grosse sinne, and so draw him into the censure and condemnation of the world.

Dauid was a man chosen of God, but by nature apt and inclined to sinne like other men, who all haue their peculiar faults: No man lineth so sincerely, but if his life in all points, at all times, be narrowly obserued and examined by his owne conscience, he may be taxed or tax himselfe, either for committing things which God hath forbidden, or omitting things which God hath commanded: And therefore is Dauid  
here

here prayeth God to teach him his way, and to lead him in a right path, and as Moses befoze him prayed vnto God saying, If I haue found fauour in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, and that I may finde grace in thy sight; So ought euery Christian to pray that God would not onely teach him but lead him also, not onely because of his enemies whose slanders hee feareth (which yet is necessary) but because God should not be dishonoured by his corrupt conuersation and sinne.

There is no man, especially Gods children, but haue enemies, not onely corporall but

but spirituell, among whom  
 the subtillest and strongest is  
 Satan, who looketh not so  
 much into what a man doth,  
 as into the inclination of his  
 heart by the things hee doth:  
 for by his workes he findeth  
 what is in man (for thoughts  
 are hid) and by his outward  
 actions he can collect where  
 unto hee is inclined: and by  
 on that he workes and laies  
 his plots accordingly, and  
 most commonly he obserueth  
 in euery man some sinne that  
 raigneth and ruleth aboue all  
 other sinnes, which he hugs  
 (as it were) in his bosome:  
 there doth Satan apply his  
 greatest battery, knowing  
 that if he vanquish him in it,  
 and

and see him to continue in it,  
it is as much as if he had in-  
ticed him to a thousand sins,  
and therefore hee laieth baits  
(according to a cunning  
Fowler or Fisherman, that  
hath one especiall bait for  
each kinde of Fowle or Fish)  
according to the desire of that  
peculiar sin wherein a man  
most delighteth, entertaining  
every occasion or fit oppor-  
tunity to feed his desire,  
which Satan finding, useth  
his instruments to feed him  
with varieties.

Every raging or rather  
raging sinne in man, may be  
compared to the disease in  
mans body called the Wolfe,  
which if it be not continually  
fed

fed with some kinde of satisfactorie matter, will some deuoure the very flesh of y part of the body wherupon it hath seized; so that sinne that a man holdeth so deare (to which hee cannot but yeeld vpon euery opportunity afforded) must be fed with the satisfying of those corrupt desires which best agree with the nature of that wolniss disease, otherwise it will euen eat by their senses, and they will become as mad men when they are restrained from what that sinne desireth: As for example, take game from the concuetious man hee will become euen out of his wits; barre  
the

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ger  
his  
so o  
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to a  
sinne  
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enem  
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stand  
whos  
bert  
loseth  
whos  
the rig  
eagai  
sound

the Drunkard of his liquoz,  
and he will rage like a she-  
beare robbed of her whelps;  
pzeuent the lasciuious man  
of his Harlots, he will swag-  
ger, swear, and aduenture  
his life to haue them: and  
so of the rest.

If therefore a man fall in-  
to any of these dominant  
sinnes, and liue in it, what  
an aduantage is it vnto his  
enemies? It is a double ad-  
uantage; first, it makes him  
scandalous in the world,  
whose good opinion with the  
bertuous and religious hee  
loseth; It offends GOD,  
whose hand is alwaies ouer  
the righteous to defend them,  
& against the wicked to con-  
found them.

Woh

How sottish then are these men that will giue entertainment at the first to such servants, as at last shall become their masters? Sinne in the beginning is weake, and with ease may be subdued, but when it hath beene cherished and nursed by awhile in our breasts, as beloued, and fed, as it will require, it becometh predominant, facing as it were a man, and as if it should say, I haue thus long overruled thee, I will yet make thee my slave. O fearefull estate, yet not a few liue in this miserable seruitute; and doth not that enemy Satan triumph to obserue his vassals thus subiected?

and

Dauid's resolution. 263

and doth he not stirre vp enemies to vpbraid them? some to mocke and scoone them? some to reppoach and reuile them? and finally, doth hee not laugh at their destruction?

Had not holy Dauid the good cause to be afraid to be thus carried away with the violence of his owne corrupt nature, which no doubt hee felt something inclinable rather to goe astray, than to goe on the way the Lord taught him? Had he not good cause (as euery man hath) instantly to pray vnto God, Teach me thy way O Lord, and leade me in thy right path, because of mine enemies? Where it appeareth

reth that it is not enough to know the way of God vnlesse wee walke in it, and what power haue we of our selues to walke aright vnlesse the spirit of God leade vs? we may thinke wee are right when wee are cleane out of the way, as many deceived silly soules doe, that thinke themselves right, and others out of the way, when indeed they walke in darknesse and haue no light at all.

Enemies are alwaies enuious against the prosperity & good that the godly receiue, and reioyce when any disgrace, misery, or misfortune befalls them: When my foot slippe (saith Dauid) mine ene-

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mies  
tan  
who  
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sinnes  
loke  
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rous I  
Achiel  
troub  
comm

*Danids resolution.* 265

mies reioyced. So doth Sa-  
tan and his instruments,  
whoneuer rest day no2 night,  
seeking to draw (if it were  
possible) Gods stone chil-  
dren into the waies of the  
wicked, and then againe to  
moue and instigate the wic-  
ked to reprocach vs for our  
sinnes, so that wee must not  
loke to liue here securely,  
euen in our seeming most  
quiet estate; for when wee  
thinke of none, and deserue  
least disgrace, Satan will  
raise bp one railing and reui-  
ling Shemei, some one traite-  
rous Iudas, or one trecherous  
Achithophel or another to  
trouble vs. And if wee haue  
committed any knowne sin,  
be

be it neuer so small, whether in our place, conversation or profession, wee shall be sure to heare it. Let vs liue neuer so warily, neuer so civilly, neuer so sincerely, we haue enemies enow to espy out our secretest actions, to heare our most priuate speech: for in the most godly little sinnes some great, and are some discovered; and great sinnes in the wicked some no sinnes, therefore haue the wicked few enemies whom they feare to see their waies, but the godly many. It is no disgrace to a wicked man to be wicked, it is his profession: as it is no blemish to the beauty of an *Aethiopian* to be blacke,

blacke, it is his naturall colour; and therefore as long as none but wicked men scandalize vs and condemne vs, we need not be ashamed; no, though they raile, reuile and curse vs, wee need not feare it, for in stead of their curses God will blesse vs: yet let vs pray, Teach me, O Lord, thy way, and leade me in thy path aright because of mine enemies.

None but enuious and wicked men are malicious enemies vnto such as feare God, and they indeed cannot sleepe vntill they haue contriued some mischief against the innocent whom they would disgrace, taking all

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occasions and aduantages to worke them any violence; though they be already afflicted, they will afflict them more; if they bee already fallen, they will euen tread vpon them to keepe them downe that they may not rise. It is their glozy if they can adde more sorrow to the sorrowfull, and more grieffe to the griened; they are continually travelling with wickednes, conceiuing mischiefe, but they commonly bring forth a lie; for the mischiefe y they intend to others falls in the end vpon their owne heads, and their cruelty vpon their owne pates: they are snared euen with the workes of their  
owne

owne hands, for God hath  
euer, he doth, and euer will  
preserue his owne from these  
wicked men; though he suf-  
fer them sometimes bodily to  
perish vnder their tyzanny, it  
is but to aggravate the sins  
of their persecutors, and the  
sooner to bring his vnto their  
finall glory. Therefore be-  
houeth the most godly to bee  
wary of their waies; for how  
much the more godly, religi-  
ous and zealous they are in  
walking with God, so much  
the more malicious is Satan  
to raise vp troubles, stan-  
ders and repproaches against  
them, by such as he can stir  
vp against vs; who howso-  
euer inwardly enuious they  
are,

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are, yet haue they learned of  
their master to speake plau-  
sibly, though deceitfully, flat-  
tering with their lips, ha-  
uing a venomous heart with-  
in, whereby they oftentimes  
allure the innocent without  
suspicion to bewray vnto  
them their secret thoughts  
and intentions: and in sim-  
plicity (by their enchanted  
subtillies) discouer that  
which these wicked serpen-  
tine wretches worke vpon,  
and wrest to bring, not only  
their names, reputation and  
credit, but their estates and  
liues in question. By their  
wicked counsell they com-  
passe our steps, they set their  
enuious eyes vpon our  
waies:

waies : If they finde wee walke blameable, they will plot to haue some blockes to be laid in our waies, that if it be possible we might stum- ble, though they could not make vs fall altogether : If we erre (on the other side) neuer so little, they will in- sult ouer vs, they will blow the trumpet of our defama- tion and cry, There, there, so would we haue it. But these deuices of theirs God seeth, and what they praaise a- gainst such as feare him: ther- fore let vs only say, Teach vs, O Lord, thy way, and leade vs in the right path because of our enemies.

As long as wee walke in  
24 the

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the way of God truly, and be  
lead that path that is right,  
let vs not feare. Heare what  
Dauid said vnto Salomon his  
sonne, whom he exhorted to  
walke in the waies of the  
Lord, to keepe his Statutes  
and his Commandements, his  
Iudgements and his Testimo-  
nies. We must endenour to  
haue Gods lawes euer be-  
foze our eies, and neuer de-  
part from his precepts: This  
is the way, walke in it.  
Though it bee a strict way  
and vnpleasant to a carnall  
minde; it is a most sweet and  
comfortable way, a way that  
leadeth here to happinesse,  
and after to Heauen.

There is another way, a  
common

common high way, much beaten by diuers passengers, all carnall men traffike this way, a very pleasant way, wherein yet many haue walked for a time, but they haue found that as a man that eateth too much hony, may surset through the sweetnesse of it, so they were euengluttred with the vanities that are strewed in the way. It is a way full of carnall content indeed, but it is but short; men are at their waies end many times when they think themselves not halfe way there, and are griened their iourney is so sone done. But when they come to the end of the race, they suddenly finde

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a most fearefull gulph which  
they cannot auoid; turne  
backe againe they cannot as  
ordinary travellers often doe  
when they haue mistaken  
their way and take another;  
but they that walke this high  
and pleasant way must bee  
enforced to stay, and to take  
vp their hideous Time, not  
for a night as waifaring men  
doe, but remaine there for  
euer with the Deuill and his  
Angels.

*A Prayer that God will be pleased to direct vs in his waies, and leade vs vprightly because of our enemies.*

**O** Gracious Lord God, most mercifull and louing father in Iesus Christ, vouchsafe to looke in mercy vpon me, teach mee thy way O Lord, and lead me in a right path because of mine enemies. Giue mee grace that I may walke aright, and pray aright, and belecue aright, and in all mine actiōs be guided by thee aright. Refraine me from the way of the wicked, and guide me

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me in the paths of righteousness, make thy way plaine before my face: for of my selfe I am blinde, I cannot see the right way, direct and guide me that I stumble not, to cause mine enemies to laugh and reioyce at my fall. Send out thy light and thy truth, let them leade me and bring mee to thine holy mountaine, where I shall be safe from mine enemies; order and direct my goings, O Lord, aright according to thy word; reclaime me from every euill way, and direct my feet in the way of truth, in that way that leadeth to life; preuent mee of that forbidden way which is pleasant yet perillous; seeming  
plaine

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plaine and delectable, but the  
end thereof is death: Lord let  
my walkings bee vpright be-  
cause of mine enemies, who  
watch euen the course of my  
life, they pry into all mine  
actions, they obserue my con-  
uersation, and if they see mee  
but slide or slip neuer so little  
awry, they sound the trum-  
pets of my disgrace: If they  
see mee to fall into any sinne  
through my frailty, they cry  
out and say, That there is no  
feare of thee before mine eies.

O my God, consider this,  
and in mercy remember I am  
but dust, by nature subiect to  
great infirmities, which I doe  
acknowledge, O Lord; re-  
claime mee from my euill in-  
clination,

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clination by thy grace, set me in the way of truth and obedience, and leade me therein for euer, and learne mee to liue after thy Commandements, and yeeld mee thy feare and thy direction that I may walk in them, for mine owne waies are (as my will is) by nature euill euermore: but thy waies are mercy and truth, and such as truly feare thy name thou teachest the waies of perfect obedience, and redcest euen sinners to walke aright, reclaiming them by thy grace from their euill waies.

Guide me that I may know thee and thy waies, and leade me aright in them: let me neuer goe astray from them, lest  
mine

mine enemies take occasion by my transgressions, to say that I haue no feare of thee before mine eies: deliuer me out of their hands O Lord, out of the hands of euill and cruell men, and from their slanderous and false tongues that are set on fire against the innocent. They hate them that offend them not, they persecute them that resist them not; let them haue no iust cause to condemne my waies.

Thou hast set before vs a blessing and a curse; a blessing for them that walke vprightly in thy waies; and a curse to them that wilfully forsake the way which thou hast appointed thy children to walke in.

O

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O shew mee the good and  
right way, and euermore leade  
me therein : Giue me grace to  
take heed of that way which  
seemet right, the end where-  
of is death : Draw me, O Lord,  
out of this way, and leade me  
by thy right hand, so shall I a-  
bandon this way, full of car-  
nall pleasures and sinfull de-  
lights : Teach me thy waies,  
the waies of obedience and re-  
pentance, the waies of righ-  
teousnesse and peace, which  
tend to eternall life. It is not  
in my power or wisdom to  
finde out, or walke in this  
way : It is hid from humane  
vnderstanding, and therefore  
euen *Moses*, though other-  
wise of deepe knowledge, be-  
ing

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ing by nature ignorant of this way, sought to be and was instructed by thee therein. How much more, good Father, need I to intreat thee to learne me this way; for I haue beene long lead awry by mine owne corrupt affections, not knowing the way of truth and righteousnesse: wherein I beseech thee to guide and leade mee now at the last and for ever, because of mine enemies, O Lord, my God, my guide, and my Redeemer, *Amen.*

VERSE

## VERSE 12.

Giue me not ouer to the lust  
of mine enemies, for there  
are false witnessers risen vp  
against mee, and such as  
speake cruelly.



What man is he  
that lineth, &  
is free from  
enemies? Of  
what estate,  
condition, or  
quality soeuer? If he be good,  
the wicked will hate him, the  
world will disfaour him,  
and the Denill will maligne  
him. If he be euill, the ver-  
tuous

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tuous will dislike him, the  
godly cannot affect him, God  
cannot blesse him : yet ought  
every man to endeavour to be  
godly, howsoever Satan will  
doe what he can to raise ene-  
mies against him, as he did  
against godly David, and a-  
gainst all the holy men of  
God from the beginning ; as  
first against Abel, against  
Iob, and aboue all, against  
Christ himselſe ; whose ene-  
mies ſeemed to haue their  
full luſt fulfilled againſt him,  
never leauing him vntill they  
had crucified him : And yet  
then were they neareſt to  
their owne confuſion when  
they had their wils of him.

David in this *Psalme ſaith*  
meth

meth to haue bene much troubled with enemies, and yet theweth in the second verse of the same, that when his enemies and his foes came vpon him to eat vp his flesh, they stumbled and fell. In the third verse, hee sheweth such faith and confidence in God, that though an Host pitched against him, his heart should not be afraid: Yet in this twelfth verse, he seemeth to feare againe, lest his enemies might yet preuaile against him; and therefore praieth, that God would not giue him ouer to the lust of his enemies; which may teach vs, that when we thinke our selues most free from, and

(as

(as it were) out of the reach  
of all enemies, not to be se-  
cure: for a reconciled enemy  
may harbour secret mis-  
chiefe, which although he  
will not for his counterfeit  
promise sake, execute by his  
open publike violence; yet  
he may suborne such secretly,  
as may renew either the  
open quarrell againe, or fals-  
ly accuse the innocent party.  
And this as it seemeth did  
Dauid finde: for when he  
thought all his enemies were  
at peace with him, he obser-  
ued some secret practises  
against him, By false witen-  
esses which were risen against  
him, who accused him af-  
resh, and procured him new,

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or moued his old Aduersaries against him, which seemeth to afright him more, than before an Host of enemies could doe. For now he praieth, that God would not giue him ouer to the lust of them that before he feared not; which sheweth, that a second danger is more fearefull than a former: And which also sheweth our too much securitie, after our deliuey from a danger, as though we need no more to feare another to follow: But if we obserue well the course of the waies of wicked men, we shal see, that they seldome giue ouer to persecute them they once desired to persecute.

cute. And God hath likewise  
such an eye vnto his owne  
children, that he will not haue  
them idle; hee will exercise  
them as long as they liue  
here; they must bee parta-  
kers of his crosses; they  
must haue enemies as hee  
had, they must suffer pover-  
tie, ignominy and disgrace  
in the world as hee did:  
Though he being Lord of all,  
and could command all; hee  
was poore, yet all the world,  
and the things in the world  
were his; when he was hun-  
gry, he could haue plentiful-  
ly supplied his hunger; being  
disgraced by the reprobate  
Iewes, he could haue done as  
Peter did with Annanias and  
Saphira,

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Saphira, haue spoken but the word, and his enemies should haue fallen dead at his feet. But he patiently suffered all, to teach vs that are but seruants, to imitate him that is our master and Lord. If they called him Belsabub, and he suffered them, why should we take scoorne to be despised, reproached, and ill intreated, and our enemies to insult ouer vs, and to haue their lust fulfilled against vs, euen to take away our liues? We are but seruants, he was our Lord, yet he endured; and shall we thinke our selues better, or deserue to be more free than he, that was guiltie of no offence against

gainst them that thus abused  
him: We being culpable of a  
thousand sinnes against him,  
and yet hath freed vs from  
the guilt and punishment of  
all: Yet it behooueth vs to  
pray as David did: Give mee  
not ouer vnto the lust of mine  
Aduersaries; For as there  
were against Christ, so there  
are false Witnessles risen vp  
against vs, and such also as  
speake cruelly: Cruell and  
wicked men haue commonly  
attending them, such as will  
speake and practise what they  
will haue them for gaine: if  
they will haue them to accuse  
any man falsly, they can coine  
matter; This man said, If  
they did destroy the Temple

p

of

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of Ierusalem which was made with hands, he would build it in three daies without hands. Whereas indeed he said, that if they did destroy the Temple of his body, hee would raise it againe in three daies, as he did. But by this may be obserued the cunning and subtilty of the Deuill, that can and doth prompt his wicked Instruments, how they may peruert the words and actions of the innocent, to a sense cleane contrary to their meaning, and make so false a Gloffe vpon it, as if it were truth it selfe; and will set such an audacious face vpon it, as (if God deale not with the falsly accused, as hee did

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did for the defence of innocent Susanna) they will haue their lust of them. Such a false witnesse was perfidious Ziba against Mephiboseth, the sonne of Jonathan, Sauls sonne, who accused him most falsly to David, perswading him that Mephiboseth went about to take from David the kingdome, onely to get Mephiboseths patrimony: as it is commonly the end of all the testimonies false witnesses giue, to gaine outward reward thereby. As the Iewes hired and suborned false witnesses against that most sanctified man Stephen, to put him to death. The like against innocent

Id 2 Naboth

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Naboth by wicked Iezabel,  
who was likewise stoned, to  
fulfill the lust of enemies.

It is a dangerous thing,  
for the most innocent man in  
the world, to fall vnder the  
testimony of false witnesses.  
The accused seldome es-  
capes, vnlesse there be a Da-  
niel to examine circumstan-  
ces to finde out the truth. A  
false witnesse is one of the fir-  
things that God himselfe ab-  
horreth: for of all men he is  
the most dangerous; and  
theresore no maruell, that  
Dauid hauing such enemies  
as made no conscience of  
whatsoever deuillish inuen-  
tion to betray him, and to  
haue their lust of him, did  
pray,

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pray, Giue me not ouer to the  
lust of mine enemies ; for  
there are false witnesses risen  
vp against mee, and such as  
speake cruelly.

David feared more false  
witnesses than the open force  
of his enemies ; who when  
they came vpon him they  
stumbled and fell ; and there-  
fore was not dismayed if an  
Host pitched against him. Se-  
cret false combinations of  
enemies accompanied with  
false witnesses, who can  
withstand, or auoid ?

The tongue which God  
made in the beginning good,  
and to be a faithfull witnesse  
of the heart, the Devill hath  
made the instrument of fals-

is :

hood

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hond and lies : For now in many, the heart & the tongue are so estranged, as the one bittereth what y other thinks not, & the other thinks what y other utters not. The tongue becomes an instrument to deceive, which was made to expaine the true meaning of the heart : But where the tongue speakes falsly, the heart cannot be right ; and where the heart is corrupt, the tongue cannot be sound.

There was once a confusion of tongues ; not of that part which moueth to frame the voice, for the tongue it selfe remained as befoze it was ; but inforced to alter the language : but now there  
sa meth

ſeemeth to be a confuſion be-  
tweene the tongue and the  
heart, which ſhould be as  
one: Both which bring ſo  
farre diſſoynd in conſent  
now, as it ſeemeth to be ano-  
ther confuſion of our lan-  
guage. One knew not what  
another ſaid, when that one  
language became ſo changed;  
and who vnderſtands now  
what another ſpeaketh, when  
he ſpeaketh what he meaneth  
not? How then can hee be  
truly vnderſtood what hee  
ſpeaketh? Men indeed are be-  
come (as it were) falſe wit-  
neſſes againſt themſelues,  
when the tongue beareth wit-  
neſſe againſt the heart, and  
the heart againſt the tongue.

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If then we become so confounded in our language, when we call for one thing, we bee offered another; all good men had need to craue a diuine Interpreter, who knoweth the heart; for by the tongue we cannot truly vnderstand what some men meane. And that is the reason so many are at this day deceiued, and vniustly many times condemned; and therefore not vnfit for euery man, though he obserue to haue no professed enemy, as Dauid seemed to haue, to pray, as Dauid did vnto God, the searcher and disposer of all hearts, and the restrainer of all false tongues, O giue me  
not

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not ouer to the lust of mine  
enemies, for there are false wit-  
nesses risen vp against mee,  
and such as speake cruelly.

*A Prayer, that God will pre-  
serue vs from our enemies,  
that they preuaile not against  
vs, and to preuent vs of false  
witnesses.*

**O** Most mighty God, De-  
fender of the faithfull,  
the Protector of them that  
berake themselves vnder thy  
protecting hand; the migh-  
tiest among men cannot hurt  
the least whom thou prote-  
ctest; the subtillest cannot  
circumuent them, whom thou

P 5      guidest

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guidest in thine owne waies. *Saul* could not hurt *David*, though he pursued him with deadly hatred, pursuing him to take away his life: Thou neuer ledest him to the lust of his enemies: Thou art powerfull, and in respect of thee, my most powerfull and politickest Aduersaries are weake and foolish. O let them not haue their wished desires against me; though they suborne false witnesses against me, let their false tongues falter in their mouthes: Let their lying lips be shut vp with shame; and let all those that take malicious counsell against me, and combine together to hurt or to destroy me, be turned enemies  
one

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one to the other, and let them doe each to other as they intend to doe vnto me. Let their tongues wherewith they thinke to speake falsly against me, cleaue to the rootes of their murtheres.

For thou hearest how proudly, hatefully, and disdainfully they speake against me falsly, as if I were their enemy: But thou art a righteous Iudge, and markest theirs and my waies, their thoughts, and their practises and policies, and my simplicitie: None of their inward inuentions, none of their wicked projects, policies, and secret practises are hid from thee, and therefore (Lord) leaue me not vnto

unto their lust. Confirme my  
faith in thee; powrethy grace  
and holy spirit into the in-  
ward parts of my soule, that I  
sincerely seruing thee, may  
either win their vnsained  
friendship, or that thou wilt  
preuent their malicious deu-  
ices against me, and that I may  
possesse mine owne in peace.  
Although they now stand vp-  
on the open stage of the world,  
and sound out the Trumpets  
of their enuious and stonde-  
rous tongues of reproach a-  
gainst me; And although they  
suborne false witnesses against  
me; let my vprightnesse ap-  
proue them lyers: Let my  
course of life so contrary to  
their false reports, try and ap-  
proue

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proue them false witness  
risen vp against me. Though  
I cannot but confesse against  
my selfe, not onely vnto thee  
in secret, but vnto them open-  
ly, that I come short of some  
duties that I ought to per-  
forme, yet consider my wil-  
ling minde to performe them  
without reproofe.

Lord, I am weake in  
strength, I am not wise e-  
nough to deale with the Poli-  
ticians of this world, I cannot  
withstand nor finde out the  
practises that mine enemies  
contriue against mee, who  
haue a strong desire to haue  
their wills & to execute their  
lust, especially false witness  
being suborned against mee:  
but

but *giue me not ouer to the lust*  
*of mine aduersaries* that speake  
so cruelly against me, falsify-  
ing the cause of their hatred as  
if I had done them iniury,  
extenuating their owne ma-  
lice and mischiese, as if their  
wicked deuices were law-  
full and grounded vpon lu-  
stice, and their violence rather  
charitable than malicious:  
what they haue done, and  
what they intend thou know-  
est, and how vniustly they af-  
flict me thou seest, who art a  
God that iudgeth right.

Rise vp therefore, O Lord,  
and take my cause into thine  
owne hand, make their wic-  
ked counsells as *Archbishops*,  
for haue they not said in  
their

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their hearts, Come let vs cut  
them off from being a people,  
and let their name bee no more  
had in remembrance? In so  
much as many of them say,  
There is no helpe for me in thee:  
Yet Lord I dismay not, for  
thou art my defence, and in  
thine appointed time wilt lift  
vp my head againe; for salua-  
tion belongeth vnto thee, O  
God, and thou wilt destroy  
the bloody and deceitful men.  
But blessed and preserved shall  
they bee that truly feare and  
trust in thee, thy power is  
seene in weaknesse, and thy  
helpe in affliction: therefore  
O Lord, let not mine enemies  
haue their lust of me.

I know thou wilt performe  
thy

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thy promise of my defence in  
thy good time, therefore will  
I rest in hope, I will patiently  
wait for yet a little while, and  
these wicked men shall not ap-  
peare. In the meane time I  
will commit my cause vn-  
to thee my Lord, my God,  
my strength and my Redee-  
mer.

VERSE

VERSE 13.

I should haue fainted except I  
had beleued to see the  
goodnesse of thee in the  
land of the living.

**F**amies troubles  
and afflictions  
are heauy to bee  
borne of such as  
are weak in  
faith, and haue not perfect  
patience to beare them, as  
may appeare by godly Dauid  
himselſe; who acknowledged  
that himſelſe, though he  
were a man choſen after  
Gods owne heart, ſhould  
haue

haue fainted vnder the malice and fury of his enemies and other afflictions, but he belæued to see the goodnes of God, namely his timely deliuery in the land of the liuing, euen here befoze the sonnes of men, where if hee had not found the goodnesse of God towards him, all men would haue thought as his enemies did, that God had utterly forsaken him for euer: and therfoze prayed God in a liuely faith that his defence might here appeare befoze he were taken hence, no moze to be sene, although he knew that after this life hee should bee in a farre moze happy and blessed estate than his

his enemies, but that hee might finde Gods fauour here, to the end that other godly afflicted men, seeing the mercies of God towards him in deliuering him out of his troubles, might by his faith and patience take like godly resolution to depend vpon the power and prouidence of God for their like deliuey.

Why art thou cast downe  
O my soule (saith David in his troubles) and so vnquiet within mee? which argueth, that troubles and afflictions euen to a faithfull man doe at the first much disquiet his heart, like as they that first are committed to prison, they

they are much disquieted, their hearts faint and are much cast downe, vntill they haue bene so; a time enured to their restraint, and then come by little and little to themselves againe; so doe they that vpon a sudden fall into any affliction as Dauid did, but hauing a little considered that it is the Lords doing, hee could then say vnto his sad soule, Wait on God, for I will yet giue him thanks for the helpe of his presence. This sheweth the strong faith and confidence of Dauid, who although his troubles were so many and heauy, even at the present, that he was ready to faint vnder them,

them, yet hee waited with a firme assurance, that the time would come wherein hee should reioyce againe and praise God againe for his helpe and certaine deliuey which hee knew was not farre off.

This teacheth euery faithfull man in his afflictions and troubles to repaire vnto God in prayer, not to be daunted or dismayd, nor to disquiet himselfe, but in patience to possesse his soule, waiting the time wherein God hath appointed to deliuer him, for it is a vaine thing and vnprofitable for a man in affliction to goe before the Lords prouidence;   
strugling

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strugling and striving by sin-  
nister and vncommanded  
meanes to free himselfe: he  
doth by that meanes the  
more intangle himselfe as the  
Bird in the Net: warranted  
meanes hee may vse, and  
those with faithfull prayer  
vnto GOD to blesse the  
meanes, for lawfull meanes  
profit not, vnlesse they be al-  
so lawfully done, and that is  
when and where God is  
made, not onely a party, but  
the principall in the meanes.  
It was a very weake wra-  
pon that Dauid vsed against  
Goliath, who was compleat-  
ly armed from the foot to the  
head, there was but one  
small part of his whole body  
vnar-

unarmed, and that was the  
foze part of his head, but  
God so directed the stone that  
came out of his sling, that it  
found that open way to cast  
that monster of men to the  
earth. If God had not added  
strength to Dauids armes,  
and by his prouidence carri-  
ed the stone aright, Dauids  
aime might haue failed the  
marke; so whatsoeuer means  
we vse, either in preuen-  
ting or easing our selues in  
any kinde of affliction, if our  
hearts be not seasoned with  
saith in God, ioined with pray-  
er, we may misse of our hope,  
and so faint in the expectati-  
on of our deliuey; and there-  
foze saith Dauid, I should haue  
fainted

fainted except I had beleueed  
to see the goodnesse of the  
Lord. Except I had depen-  
ded on his prouidence for my  
deliuey from mine enemies,  
and had taken hold and borne  
assured of the true persoz-  
mance of his promises to  
ease me of mine afflictions,  
I should haue sunk vnder  
the burthen of my troubles.  
God who is our Father is  
goodnesse it selfe, of whom  
and from whom wee obtaine  
all things through faith in  
his Sonne: by him we liue,  
moue and haue our being;  
and therefore there is none,  
in whom or by whom we  
should seeke helpe in trou-  
bles, but in God alone. He is

our

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our hope and strength, and  
helpe in troubles ready to bee  
found: Therefore (saith Da-  
uid) I will neither faint nor  
feare: and againe, my defence  
is in God, who preserueth the  
vpright in heart. He is God,  
and none besides; he is migh-  
ty, and none else; Why then  
should we faint in any trou-  
bles? Why should wee bee  
daunted, though enemies rise  
vp against vs? Seeing this  
God is our God, whose god-  
nesse, helpe and deliuery (if  
we beleue) we shall see, and  
our very enemies shall see it  
even here, here in this vale of  
misery amongst the sons of  
men, he shall be our guide and  
defence vnto death.

¶

Unbe.

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Unbelæse is a most dangerous disease in the heart of man, nothing succedeth comfortably vnto them that belæue not in God: good things vnto vnbelæuers turne to euill. As vnto a raw, crude, & a stomack ouercome with superfluous humoꝝs, the best meat turnes to increase their disease; so to an vnfaithfull man all things worke together to the increase of Gods iudgements against him. As to the sonnes in law of Lot in Sodome, who would not belæue the Word of God declared by Lot, for the confusion of the City perished. So the children of Israel, to whom God had promised to  
give

giue the Land of Canaan,  
in their iourney towards it,  
did not onely not belerne the  
Lord, but murmured against  
him saying, Who shall giue  
vs flesh to eat? would God we  
had died in the land of Æ-  
gyt, or in this Wildernesse:  
would God wee were dead,  
were it not better for vs to  
turne into Ægypt? With  
many such reproachful, mur-  
murous & faithlesse obiurga-  
tions, as well against God  
himselfe as against Moses  
and Aaron: but for their in-  
fidelity, faintings & murmu-  
rings, God answered their  
impious desires to die, he de-  
stroyed them in the Wilder-  
nes in his heauy displeasure.

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The frailty of a faithlesse man is great, he can beare no troubles, hee can endure no afflictions with any kinde of patience, because hee hath no true and sound vnderstanding of God and his providence. He thinkes if he prosper, and by his naturall policy and meanes, can prevent dangers and troubles, or hauing them can vse sinister meanes to ease them, hee ascribes it to his owne carnall wisdom; but when that preuaileth not, but that hee is pinched and deeply plunged in distresses and miseries which he cannot ease; then hee begins to faint and to murmur and cry, Who shall giue

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giue mee flesh to eat? How shall I get mony to supply my wants? Would God I had died when I was young; would God I were dead, and the like.

The troubles and afflictions of the wicked and the godly differ not in the outward shew: the wicked may bee pained, so may the most godly: they may haue like outward crosses and afflictions, but their bearing of them is vnequall; the wicked, as befoze is said, faint and fume, and murmur, and grudge at euery small crosse or affliction: and although they heare the promises of God, who is ready to helpe, yet they beleeue them not.

Q; They

318 The Imitation of

They can bee assured of nothing that hangs vpon Gods promises: they would think, and speake, and object against God, as that Prince in Samaria did, when Elisha sozetold from the mouth of God plenty to that distressed and besieged City: Though the Lord (said hee) would make windowes in the Heauen, could this come to passe? So incredulous are men without sound faith, that once downe, they thinke they shall neuer rise; once in trouble, they shall neuer haue ease: and this is the cause that men lacking faithfull, faint vnder their crosses, and despaire in their afflictions:  
but

but it is otherwise with the truly faithfull indæd, who know by the fozetelling of the Spirit of God in his Word, that troubles attend the godly as the shadow the body; and therefore prepare themselves befoze hand for them, and reioyce in them, in as much as they are partakers here of Christs sufferings: So they are likewise assured, that when his glozy shall appeare, they also shall appeare with him in glozy; yet the most faithfull may haue a kinde of fearefulnesse and fainting for a time, but not such as shall pꛛeuaille, but they will sone overcome all such faithlesse qualmes by

320 The Imitation of  
a lively apprehension of  
Gods ready helpe thzough  
faith; and then they may in-  
ded say as David did, I  
should haue fainted except I  
had beleeued to see the good-  
nesse of the Lord in the land  
of the liuing. There is none  
of himselfe so strong, but  
when troubles and afflictions  
come will faint if faith in  
God faile them.

*A Prayer that God will not ser-  
sake vs in our troubles, and  
that our faith faile not.*

**H**Ad I not taken hold (O  
God) of thy louing pro-  
mises,

*Dauids resolution.* 321

mises, and beleueed thy Word, I should haue fainted, and yet should faint vnder my troubles, if I did not beleue that thou, O Lord, knowest my troubles, and that mine afflictions are not hid from thee; thou hast promised to be a refuge for the poore, a refuge in due time euen in affliction: keepe me, O Lord, as the apple of thine eye according to thy promise, hide me vnder the shadow of thy wings from the wicked that oppresse me.

I haue called vpon thee in my troubles, O Lord, and cried vnto thee, my God, and thou hast heard me and holpen mee, yea when I haue

Q 5 beene

The Imitation of  
beene ready vnto thee  
fainted, I haue cried vnto thee  
and thou hast redeemed mee  
and deliuered me. Those mer-  
cies of thine, O Lord, remem-  
ber still, renew them euermore  
towards mee, for I stand in  
continuall need of thy conti-  
nuall presence.

Thy goodnesse is great, O  
Lord, which thou hast laid vp  
for them that feare thee, and  
done to them that trust in  
thee, euen before the sonnes  
of men. I haue felt thy fa-  
uour, and formerly tasted of  
thy loue. How could I but haue  
fainted, but that I still beleue-  
ued to bee partaker of thy  
goodnesse and mercy in my  
troubles? Thou, O Lord, art  
my

Dauids resolution. 323

my secret place, thou preservest me in trouble, and compassest me about with ioyfull deliuerance, therefore will I not faint, knowing that thine eyes are vpon mee, and thine care open vnto my prayers. I trust in thee, I will not bee afraid what man can doe vnto me.

Thou Lord hast said concerning the faithfull; *hee shall call vpon mee and I will heare him*, so that both my prayers and thy hearing are both thine owne gifts. Nay, thou addest further, Lord, *I will bee with him in trouble, I will deliuer him and glorifie him*. O why should I feare then or faint, seeing thou art pleased to

to be with me in my troubles,  
as to take part as it were with  
me of mine afflictions: wonder-  
full and vnspeakable, O Lord,  
is the extent of thy power, and  
wonderfull the limits of thy  
loue; impossible it is to finde  
out the depth of thy compas-  
sions towards thy children;  
thou hearest vs before we call,  
thou giuest before wee aske,  
thou helpest vs before wee  
cry, thou giuest vs power to  
call, thou teachest vs what to  
aske, and thou euen meetest  
vs when we are but euen com-  
ming vnto thee.

Thus gracious hast thou  
euer beene, O Lord, thus gra-  
cious thou art, and thus gra-  
cious wilt thou shew thy  
selfe

*Dauids resolution.* 325

selfe vnto them that beleewe  
to see and taste of thy good-  
nesse, euen vnto the end of  
the world; and as thou art  
gracious, so art thou absolute  
in wisdome; thou knowest  
how to releue the distressed,  
and how to comfort the affli-  
cted, yea when they are ready  
to faint, and to giue ouer any  
more to call for helpe, being as  
it were hoarse with crying as  
*Dauid* was, thou giuest them  
of thy water of life, and it re-  
uiueth the fainting foules, and  
strengtheneth the weake spi-  
rits that groane vnder the  
burthen of any calamity or  
trouble.

Strengthen mee therefore  
with thy grace, O Lord, I shall  
not

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not then faint nor feare, for  
my sure defence is in thee,  
who wilt in time bring the  
malice of mine enemies to an  
end; and as I belecue, so shall  
I see thy goodnesse in the  
land of the liuing: for thou  
that hast promised it art iust  
of thy promises, and power-  
full to performe what thou  
hast said. Therefore euen here  
I doe meereley belecue to re-  
ceiue at thy hands free release  
and pardon of all that hath  
beene the ground of my trou-  
bles and cause of my miseries.  
Grant mee Lord freedome  
from mine enemies, and re-  
stitution of what I haue  
beene depriued of by any of  
them: then shall they finde  
that

*Dauids resolution.* 327

that I haue not onely not  
fainted, but beleued to see  
and haue seene thy good-  
nesse, O Lord, euen here in  
the Land of the liuing, where  
euen mine enemies and my  
foes shall witnesse that I haue  
not beleued in thee my God  
in vaine.

VERSE

## VERSE 14.

Hope in the Lord, be strong,  
and he shall comfort thine  
heart, and trust in the  
Lord.



his verse is a fit  
and comfortable  
conclusion of this  
psalme; shewing  
herein that Da-  
uid in all his troubles depen-  
ded onely on God; and by his  
owne experience encoura-  
geth himselfe and all other  
men in all kindes of troubles  
and afflictions to doe the like;  
and then, as he found they  
shall

shall finde, that God will neuer faile nor forsake them that truly trust in him. Though David say here, Hope in the Lord; he speaks not to the encouragement of other men, excluding himself: but rather stirreth by his owne soule, his faith and affections; as if hee should haue said, O my soule, hope in the Lord: Thou hast proued the goodnesse of the Lord sufficiently in all thy troubles: Thine enemies haue not preuailed against thee: Thy foes haue not had their lust of thee; therefore as thou hast heretofore hoped; so still hope in the Lord, faint not, but be strong; be not afraid  
what.

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whatsoever befallerh thee, or  
whosoener assailerh thee, be  
not dismayed; for he that hath  
hitherunto bene thy helper  
and refuge, will neuer leaue  
thee nor forsake thee, if thou  
hope in him and be strong in  
faith. And though thou be in  
danger, in trouble, and in  
whatsoever affliction, and  
seest no deliuey present;  
trust in the Lord, and he  
will deliuer thee and comfort  
thine heart: For if in trouble  
and danger there were in-  
stant deliuey, there were no  
place for Hope; for Hope is  
of things not seene, not of  
things presently enioyed.  
Therefore David exhorts  
himselfe ( as it were ) and  
others

othe  
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mis  
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thee  
take  
fret  
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ry D

*Dauids resolution.* 331

others to wait on God for their delivery out of their miseries & troubles, thzough faith. Hope in the Lord, wait on God with faithfull patience: Gudge not though troubles arise, though crosses come, and afflictions befall thee; be strong, be constant, take courage, murmur not, fret not, disquiet not thy selfe, but be strong, and trust in the Lord.

There are some, no doubt, that can beare troubles, nay tortures, with a seeming invincible patience in an ill cause; carrying themselves with such a balorous force of spirit, as if they had the very Quintessence of faith, and  
an

The Imitation of  
an vndaunted hope; as we  
may reade of Reualiack, Bal-  
chafar, and other murtherers  
of Kings. It is but a pati-  
ence without true patience;  
fo; without obedience to  
Gods precepts, there is no  
true religion; without true  
religion, there can bee no  
true faith; without true  
faith, no true patience; and  
therefoze that patience that  
is shewed in such, and like  
capitall murtherers, howso-  
euer constantly they may  
seeme to endure their to;  
ments, it is but the delusion  
Satan, that while they are  
yet breathing, doth stand to  
animate them to that seeming  
patience, and resolution out-  
ward,

ward, which (the parties being dead) their consciences shall neuer appone, but their last gaspe shall carrie that hozro; with it, that if it might after outwardly appeare, would manifestly testifie, that as the cause for which they suffered, was in it selfe wicked, their punishments legally and iustly deserved and inflicted; their patience would shew it selfe a kinde of desperate running head-long into their owne perdition: Learning then these men to their owne Diabollieall strength, let vs hope in the Lord, let vs pray to become strong in him, faithfull in him, and truly patient in him,

334 The Imitation of

him in all our sufferings, for there is no commendable suffering for euill doing; and therefore saith S. Paul, speaking to the faithfull: Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a cheefe, &c. But if any man suffer as a Christian, namely for Christs Gospels sake, and for well doing, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorifie God in this behalfe, namely, that he is accounted worthy to suffer for the truth of Christ.

Hope in the Lord; Here is our confidence: Bee strong; here is our constancy: And he shall comfort thine heart; Here is the end of Hope and strength, comfort of the heart.

Who

Whosoever then hopeth of helpe from any inferior creature, nay, from an Angell in heaven, and excludes God; or standeth vpon his owne strength, wealth, wisdom, friends, or worldly policy, and thinketh by these, or any of these to be freed from danger, eased in troubles, or relieved in want, exempting God; nay, if he take not the counsell of God, by the direction of his word and prayer; his hope will proue but a shadow, and his strength as the strength of a Bull-rush.

Dauid bendeth his ries from all these, to the loue, power, and providence of God, in whom and whose aid

aid he onely taketh for his strength : assuring himselfe, that he will not onely send him outward reliefe according to his hope ; but with inward toy and consolation comfort his heart : Therefore doth he encourage himselfe and others, to hope in the Lord, and not in carnall meanes : To bee strong in faith in God, not in y strength of humane aid. God must be totally our hope & strength, or else he will be no part : for a hope that is partly in God, and partly in other meanes, is not the hope that tieth the promise of the true comfort, but that hope that is confirmed and made strong by faith.

faith. To this hope is a promise annexed, that when dangers, enemies and troubles, beset a man round about, though he want things necessary, though sickness afflict him, though crosses without and griefes within doe oppresse him, though friends faile him, and every thing seeme to goe against him, and he be depriued of all visible meanes to escape; there remaineth yet hope in the Lord to be patient, and not to faint.

This hope is the gift of God: But there is a hope that is common to carnall men. They hope vpon some probabilities seeme, or con-

R. ceined:

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reined: As the hope of a son  
for the inheritance of a fa-  
ther or a friend, for some-  
thing upon death to be gi-  
uen them, and the like. This  
is not that hope that David  
meanes, when he saies hope,  
but a certaine kinde of un-  
certaine expectation of things  
desired. But Davids hope is  
a saving hope, necessarily  
ioyned with faith and a pati-  
ent waiting: For that which  
we stedfastly beleue shall  
come to passe, and in nothing  
is the force of faith and hope  
more seen or felt, than in af-  
liction and trials: For these  
bring forth patience, and pa-  
tience experience, and experi-  
ence hope; which maketh the  
godly

*Dauids resolution.* 339

godly to retoyce in tribulation, wherein is glory and no shame : whereas in carnall hope there is often shame and seldome glory.

Saint Paul was so farre from being ashamed of his afflictions, as he gloried in them, for the hopes sake that is set before vs all, of a most excellent issue, and end of our hope ; and as through the holy Ghost, the God of hope plentifully filled Paul with ioy and strength, euen in his afflictions, and with peace in believing the promises, whereby he abounded in hope, that all his troubles, trials, and afflictions should end with comfort ; So let vs

It is

pray

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pray vnto the same God of hope to be filled with like hope, that our afflictions may likewise end in comfort; which though we presently possesse not, yet let vs with that blessed Apostle, with patience wait for it.

But Pauls hope and patience aimed to heavenly, not to earthly accomplishments; not looking for the euent of his hope in this life: How then may his hope of heavenly glory, and Dauids hope to be defended and retained here in the land of the living concurre? They may well stand together: Euen as Christ by healing of corporall diseases, made men heavenly minded,  
and

David's resolution. 341

and cleane by forgiving their  
sinnes; so David prayed not  
so simply for corporall deli-  
uerie, but he prayed also for  
the light of the truth, that he  
might dwell in the Temple  
of God, for mercy, and the  
like. And although Paul see-  
med by his words to hope  
onely for heavenly glory, ne-  
cessaries for this life were  
necessarily included. He that  
duly and truly praiſes for  
heavenly, cannot be frustrate  
of earthly: and he that praiſes  
faithfully for earthly, cannot  
but therewith ioyne heauen-  
ly blessings; for true and sin-  
cere hope includes both. We  
therefore that through faith  
in Christ doth hope in the

R 3

LORD,

Lord, and becommeth strong  
in him: Hee will comfort  
his heart with the supply  
both of heavenly and earthly  
blessings. As it is lawfull for  
vs to pray vnto God for coꝝ  
poꝝall necessities; so are we  
bound to hope and wait for  
them. Without hope of vi-  
ctoꝝy Dauid would neuer  
haue entred the combat with  
Goliath.

We must therefore hope  
in the Lord and bee strong,  
trusting in God; and our  
hearts shall bee comforted.  
We may not loke backe oꝝ  
about vs for helpe, our helpe  
commeth from heauen; there-  
foꝝe must we not hope, and  
hope a hope partly from a  
boue,

bone, and partly from beneath; but our hope must be in God alone: yet not to countme or despise the inferior meanes that God useth here below, as his Instruments for our good; in whom we may haue a kinde of hope, as David had in Jonathan, that he would deale faithfully with him in the matter of Saul his father: so may we hope in man: but our confidence must be in God alone.

What God hath promised in his Word, he will assuredly performe to them that truly beleue. And that did David finde, even when the Crowne was like to be taken from his head: Vee

344 The Imitation of

fainted not, but held fast by the accustomed loue and help of God, and became strong in faith, even when his enemies were in their fiercest sura- gainst him. He waited still, vsing little or no other resis- tance against his enemies, than seruent praier to God, and his counsell: and his ex- pectation in patience was not in vaine; for the Lord sub- dued his enemies without the great force of David; and thereupon he took courage, he hoped in the Lord, he was strong in faith, and the Lord did comfort his heart.

He fought not as the wic- ked doe, kniuer and forbid- den meanes to be deliuered:

For

*Dauids resolution.* 345

For when Saul his mortall  
enemy pursued him with  
deadly malice to take away  
his life; yet when Saul fell  
into his hands, and had him  
twice in his power, and  
might haue ended the quar-  
rell, and freed himselfe of  
danger, he would not doe it,  
no, though he might haue  
made present way for him-  
selfe to the kingdome, whose  
it was after Saul: yet neither  
his owne perill wherein hee  
daily stood, through the ma-  
lice and fury of Saul, nor his  
owne future right to the  
Crowne could moue him to  
touch the Lords anointed;  
contrary to the minds of ma-  
ny ambitious men, both of

346 The Imitation of  
former and latter ages, who  
are loth to let slip any oppor-  
tunitie offered, be it neuer so  
brisk, to aduance their  
greatnesse. But David staid  
himselfe vpon hope, that God  
who had so often deliuered  
him, would still doe it with-  
out any vnlawfull meanes of  
his owne, and in his time  
appointed would aduance  
him as he had promised, and  
therefore waited the time  
with patience, comforting  
his heart in the middell of his  
dangers. And long it was  
not before he came lawfully  
to that which before he might  
and would not, because he  
hoped in God whom he knew  
he should haue offended, if he  
had

*Dauids resolution.* 347

had taken the counsel of some that aduised him.

There is no hope to that hope whereunto David encourageth himselfe & others, no strength to that strength: and no mans heart can be truly comforted, but by the comfort wherewith he affirmeth his heart was comforted: therefore chargeth he by his owne soule with this holy resolution, to hope in the Lord, with this heavenly strength, to be strong in the Lord, and with that comfort wherewith he was comforted of the Lord. There is a hope that is vaine, a strength that is weake, and a comfort that is but counterfeit.

348 The Imitation of

terfeit. Let vs then take hold of that hope, & that strength, and that comfort that is of God, and trust in him: So shall we not need to be afraid of enemies, to faint in afflictions, but shall be sure to finde comfort in all our troubles.

Salomon saith, that hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart; but that is but to the faint-hearted: For if we wait not, it is no hope; but if we abide with patience Gods appointed time, we shall enjoy what we hope for: And when the desire cometh it is a tree of life. And David having often gathered the fruit of this tree,

tree, and fed thereon when he fainted, he giues here of the same fruit to others; Hope (saith he) in the Lord, be strong, be not faint-hearted, though hope be deferred: so comming the thing we hope for will tarry no longer than a conuenient time, and then it will comfort the heart. Hope groweth strong, by the effects of Gods goodnesse for: merly hoped for, and had: which Saint Paul affirmeth, encouraging the Corinthians as Dauid did himselfe and others, To hope, to be strong, to trust in the Lord, and to lay hold vpon the hope that is set before vs, which hope we haue as an anker of the soule,

sure

350 The Imitation of  
sure and stedfast. And this is  
the comfort of the heart that  
David meaneth, even our  
faith in God, whereby wee  
take hold of the assured per-  
formance of his promises, not  
onely of temporall and corpo-  
rall, but of spirituall and ce-  
lestiall blessings: And the pa-  
tient waiting for them is our  
Hope.

Now then can it bee, that  
God who hath promised vn-  
to the faithfull the life to  
come, that with patience in  
hope wait for it vnder the  
crosse, should not consider &  
regard their dangers, trou-  
bles, afflictions, even in this  
life? For if he haue giuen his  
Sonne to die for our sinnes,  
how

*Dauid's resolution.* 351

how should he not with him  
giue vs all things to enioy?  
Though wee must wait his  
time: he is not slacke as some  
men count slacknesse, but is  
alwaies ready and at hand;  
he that hath promised, he is  
faithfull and true. Though  
the vnfaithfull will not take  
his word, not his band, not  
his oath; the faithfull know  
and are assured, that he will  
neuer faile them, nor forsake  
them; Therefore hope in the  
Lord, be strong, and he will  
comfort thine heart: And  
trust in the Lord.

*A Prayer for strength, patience, and hope in troubles.*

**O** Father, possessor of Heauen and Earth, and the disposer and preseruer of them and of all things within the same, the fountaine of all perfect hope, the giuer of patience, and maintainer of our strength; thou knowest my troubles, and beholdest mine afflictions, and what and how many they are, and how burthensome vnto mee thy weake creature: in stead therefore of my weake ability, giue mee thy preuailing strength,  
give

*Dauids resolution.* 353

giue me hope in thee, let mee be strong in thee, let my comfort be of thee, and let me truly trust in thee, then shall I with patience beare these and whatsoever troubles it shall please thee to lay vpon me.

Arme mee with faith, O Lord, that I trusting in thy defence may not sinke vnder the weight of my troubles importable to flesh and bloud; thou hast promised to bee the God of my saluation, so shall nothing hurt mee; my glory, so nothing shall disgrace me; my rocke and my strength, so nothing shall moue mee nor remoue mee from my trust in thee.

I am thine, saue mee, keepe  
me

The limitation of  
me as the apple of thine eye,  
hide me vnder the shadow of  
thy protecting wings, then  
shall no enemy annoy mee, no  
trouble dismay mee, nor affli-  
ction or feare shall cast mee  
downe: by thee I shall with-  
stand or escape the fury, force,  
& fraud of all my foes; by thee  
I shall bee timely releued in  
all my necessities, and in thee  
shall I bee comforted in all  
mine afflictions: I will not  
feare, thou art my God; I will  
not faine, thou art the com-  
fort of my heart: Let mee still  
taste of thy goodnesse, and be-  
hold thy saluation; in hope  
let mee hold fast by thee, in  
faith let me be strong in thee,  
with comfort let mee reioyce  
and

*Dauids resolution.* 355

and be glad in thee.

Continue thy mercies towards mee, O Lord, for my soule trusteth in thee, knowing and confessing that I haue no other Comforter but thee, no Defender but thee, nor any Helper but thee: Forsake me not therefore, O my God, in my greatest need; send from Heauen and saue me, for all power belongeth vnto thee, therefore doth my soule cleaue vnto thee, it longeth and thirsteth for thy saluation.

O let mee plentifully taste how sweet thy goodnesse is; thy goodnesse appeared in my creation, more in my redemption, but most in mine election; thou formedst me in the wombe,

wombe, thou broughtest me  
thence, giuing me hope euen  
from my Mothers brest, and  
I was euen then cast vpon thy  
providence, therefore leaue  
me not nor be farre from mee;  
now trouble is besalne mee;  
but as thou hast taken charge  
of me from the beginning, so  
continue still to defend me,  
for I haue none besides thee  
to helpe me, therefore cast I  
my burthen vpon thee, for  
thou hast taken vpon thee to  
nourish me. In thee, O Lord,  
I trust, let mee neuer be asha-  
med nor confounded, deliuer  
me according to thy promise,  
for thou art my hope, O Lord,  
in thee haue I trusted from my  
youth.

Let

*Dauids resolution.* 357

Let my prayers, O Lord,  
enter into thy presence, heare  
me and helpe me, let nothing  
hinder the worke of thy mer-  
cies towards me. not mine vn-  
worthinesse, O Lord, but ac-  
cept me worthy in thy most  
worthy; then shall not the  
weaknesse of my faith dimi-  
nish my hope, nor extenuate  
my strength, nor depriue me  
of my comfort in thee; but  
my faith, hope, strength and  
comfort shall increase more  
and more, and patience shall  
haue it perfect working in  
me, to wait vntill thine ap-  
pointed time come for my de-  
liuery out of some of my trou-  
bles, for I endure many, O  
Lord, and the least of them of  
weight

Let

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weight more than sufficient  
to preſſe mee downe vnleſſe  
thou ſupport mee, yet I ac-  
knowledge them eaſie in  
compariſon of my euill de-  
ſeruings.

O pardon mine offences,  
cleanſe me of my finnes, and  
make mee vpright in thy  
waies; then ſhall I with per-  
fect patience beare my trou-  
bles and reſt in hope vntill it  
ſhall pleaſe thee to eaſe me of  
my troubles, or to bring them  
to an end, which grant graci-  
ous Lord God in Ieſus Chriſt,  
to whom with thee and the  
holy Ghoſt, be honour, pow-  
er and praife for euermore.

*Amen.*

*A*

*A Prayer for forgiveness of  
sinnes, reformation of life,  
and comfort in affliction.*

**O** My God my God, hide  
not thy face from mee,  
stop not thine eares at my  
prayers, and refuse not to  
heare the words of my com-  
plaint; though I cannot but  
confesse, O Lord, against my  
selfe, that by reason of my sins  
I haue deserued thy displea-  
sure, and that in so high a  
measure, as if thou shouldest  
utterly confound me, yet  
were there no iniustice in  
thee, for the euills that I haue  
com-

committed, and the good duties I haue omitted, in thy seuerer iustice deserue the same; but Lord looke not so narrowly into my waies as to obserue and register against me euery sinne committed and euery duty omitted by me, knowing that I am by nature corrupt and sinfull, as all my fathers were.

Lord, what were *Abraham, Izaak, Iacob, Iob, Noah, Lot, Moses, Eliab, or Dauid*, though a man chosen after thine owne heart? *Paul* that elect vessell, but men by nature carnall, and euen sold vnder sinne, vnill thou of thine owne free mercy vouchsafedst to insue heavenly wisdom

*Dauids resolution.* 361

dome into their hearts, and diuine graces into their soules? vntill thou diddest fully season them aboue others by thy holy Spirit, yet Lord thou knowest, that euen these select vessels of thine were not without their owne naturall infirmities. They stood not vprightly by their owne strength, but by thee; if they had had will and power of and in themselves to worke righteousness, they might haue had whereof to boast, but not with thee; but being only supported by thee, they gaue the sole glory to thee.

Seeing then, gracious Father, that all our most godly fore-fathers had their defects

S

by

The Imitation of  
by nature, and their perfecti-  
on through thy grace; I being  
corrupt, as they were by na-  
ture borne corrupt, and  
brought forth the fruits of  
corruption vntill thou begat-  
test them anew by thy Spi-  
rit, what differ I from them  
by nature? And therefore,  
Lord, as they became holy,  
not of themselves but by thee;  
so canst thou make me holy,  
as they were holy, by the same  
grace.

There is none, O Lord,  
that by his owne wisdom is  
capable of that wisdom  
whereby to know thee aright,  
how much lesse able by his  
owne power to performe that  
obedience which may make  
him

*Dauids resolution.* 363

him accepted of thee?

If then it be, as indeed it is, of thine owne free mercy and grace, that any man becomes wise in thee and righteous before thee, who hath cause to boast of his owne merit? Or who needs despaire of his owne vnworthinesse, seeing thou art equally mercifull to all whom thou hast called and accepted into the number of them that shall be saued?

O send downe, send downe from Heauen, that thy sanctifying Spirit into my heart, that that liuely faith whereby our most godly fore-fathers were accepted of thee, may be more and more inkindled, and breake forth into a holy

S 2 flame

The Imitation of  
flame of godlinesse and zeale,  
and my whole man be chan-  
ged into the same image of  
sanctity, which appeared in  
them in whom thou most de-  
lightest; then thou my God,  
now deseruedly offended with  
me for my sinnes past, shalt  
bee so fully reconciled vnto  
me againe, though not by my  
best renewed workes, which are  
and will be for euer here im-  
perfect; but through the me-  
rits and mediation of thine  
owne and onely Sonne, whose  
death is my life, and thy mer-  
cies in him my saluation.

This is my hope, O Lord,  
though I bee yet in the estate  
of corruption, and enforced  
to vndergoe infinite infirmi-  
ties

*Dauids resolution.* 365

ties of body and minde by nature. Thou who art the God of *Abraham*, and of all our godly fore-fathers dead to the world, art no lesse the same God vnto those that are thine yet liuing in the world. And as they already dissolued, are now in glory with thee in the Heauens, so confirme my faith in thee and order my waies, that I being likewise dissolued through Christ my Redeemer, may be also glorified with them, and with them giue glory to thee.

Make me therefore, gracious Father, to abound here, as they here abounded, in all spirituall graces and heavenly vertues, that I may finde thee

S 3

a

366 The Imitation of  
a like louing father vnto me, as  
thou wert a father vnto *Abra-*  
*ham*, and a helping God, as  
thou wert vnto *Iacob*, and  
then shall I offer, euen here,  
the sacrifice of vnfained praise  
vnto thy name, and make  
mine humble prayers vnto  
thee, in his name whose death  
and mediation thou acceptest  
aboue all other whatsoeuer sa-  
crifices.

O accept that his sacrifice,  
made once for all, for all be-  
leeuers; it is sufficient, Lord,  
to purge me from all my sins  
that formerly haue offended  
thee, and to keepe mee from  
future wilfully displeasing  
thee.

My sinnes, O Lord, I doe  
con-

*Dauids resolution.* 367

confesse haue worthily moued thee to correct me: I feele thy rod, but the rod of a louing father, not to confound me, but to confirme me, not to destroy me, but to saue me.

O let me not faint vnder thy correcting hand, which thou hast promised shall be no more heauily laid vpon mee than I shall be able to beare.

Let not therefore, Lord, my faith faile me, but let perfect patience haue it effectuell working in me; then whatsoever it shall please thee to appoint mee to beare, I shall beare it; for my heart through thy grace is prepared to obey thee.

Thou hast beene ever my  
S 4 helper

368 The Imitation of  
helper since I was borne, thou  
hast vpholden me, sustained  
and relieved mee, O forsake  
me not now when all carnall  
helpe faileth me.

There is no certaine hope  
in the helpe of man; though  
he promise, he may be vnable  
or vnwilling to performe; if  
he yeeld me helpe it is of thee,  
and among thy promised  
meanes of helpe; and nothing  
hindreth the performance of  
thy promise of helping mee,  
but the weaknesse of my faith  
in not stedfastly beleeuing,  
mine impatiencie in not wil-  
lingly bearing, and my want  
of liuely hope in not conten-  
tedly waiting thine owne  
good time in effecting what  
thou

*Dauids resolution.* 369

thou hast promised.

Yet I haue hope, louing Father, that comming, thy helpe will come, and that in a time most cōuenient in thine owne wisdom, although through mine infirmity I thinke it long, but when it cometh, it shall be as a Well, not only of releeuing but of liuing water, springing vp not onely to my corporall comfort, but to my spirituall & eternall glory.

In the meane time, O Lord, let mee euermore taste of thy goodnesse, that I faint not vnder the burthen of my troubles, but as thou hast worthily corrected me, so vouchsafe mercifully to relieue me.

In hope and assurance of

S 5

this

370 The Imitation of  
this thy mercy, O Lord, I  
commend and commit my  
selfe, my soule and body, vnto  
thy fatherly disposing, for  
thou hast promised to take  
care of me, therefore cast I my  
care vpon thee, not as carelesse  
of mine owne duty, but in a  
liuely faich going forward,  
waiting thy leisure and thy  
good pleasure, when thou  
wilt come and how thou wilt  
deliuer me, O Lord, make no  
long tarrying, *Amen.*

*An effectuall Prayer for for-  
giuenesse of finnes.*

O Lord, when I doe con-  
sider the account that I  
am to make for the time which  
I

*Dauids resolution.* 371

I haue so sinfully spent in this  
life, and how I haue walked  
here as in a Wildernesse of all  
impieties: I feele my consci-  
ence burthened with so heauy  
a weight of feare and trem-  
bling, that I am cast downe  
as into a gulph of ineuitable  
danger, and know not which  
way to turne mee with any  
hope of comfort: if I turne  
me to the consideration of my  
best workes, I finde them ra-  
ther to aggrauate than to ex-  
tenuate my feare: if I appeale  
vnto thee as thou art a seuer  
Iudge, I shall be condemned  
in thy iust iudgement; I ther-  
fore as the prodigall son, doe  
vpon the knees of mine unfai-  
ned heart fall downe before  
thee,

thee, imploring mercy though I deserue it not; but Lord, I know that in thy seuerest iustice thou art accustomed to remember mercy, and in thy hottest displeasure thou shewest compassion euen to greatest sinners, euen vpon their vnfaigned desire to repent: how much more vpon their actual and sincere repentance, especially of such as through a liuely faith take hold of Christ, who hath taken vpon him to stand betweene thy iustice and a sinner. O accept his death and merits for the forgiuenesse of my sinnes, who by reason of them am become deeply indangered and indebted vnto thee.

thee. And if thou shouldest  
exact the vitermost farthing  
at my hands, I were neuer a-  
ble to make the least satisfacti-  
on; and the more hardly can  
I answer the committing of  
so many sinnes, and the omit-  
ting of so many good duties,  
by how much I haue receiued  
a great measure, yea many ta-  
lents of grace, and a great  
portion of heavenly know-  
ledge at thy hands, which I  
should haue vsed, not onely to  
the good of mine owne soule,  
and comfort of mine owne  
conscience, but to the increase  
of spirituall knowledge in o-  
thers, whom I should haue en-  
deuoured to haue drawne to  
the obedience of thy will by  
the

354 The Imitation of  
the example of mine obedi-  
ence.

Alas, good Father, such hath  
beene the neglect of my duty  
in this behalfe, that I haue  
not onely laid these heavenly  
treasures vnder the earthly  
corruption of mine owne  
heart, but haue laid out the  
wicked dregs of originall sin,  
and haue therewith gained  
vnto my selfe infinite iniqui-  
ties and innumerable actuall  
sinnes, in so much as iniustice  
thou maist condemne me as a  
most vnprofitable disposer of  
thy manifold graces: and the  
more, good Father, by how  
much I haue not onely sin-  
ned my selfe, and that often-  
times, as it were, with a high  
hand,

*Dauids resolution.* 375

hand, but in alluring and stirring vp others to sinne by mine example; nay Lord, many times by mine owne instigation, and thereby the more dangerously drawne downe thy displeasure vpon my selfe, and them that haue sinned by the example of my sinne.

Lord, what shall I say to excuse me? What shall I bring vnto thee to appease thee? If I say the corruption of mine owne nature prouoked mee, and I did sinne; thou hast commanded mee to mortifie the deeds of my corrupt flesh by thy Spirit. If I plead that the world allured mee and I did sinne, thou hast forbidden mee to loue the world or  
the

the things in the world: if I say Satan incited me, and I did sinne, thou hast commanded me to resist Satan and his tentations, so that though I plead with *Adam*, that my *Heuab*, my carnall part that thou gauest me, did moue me and I did sinne, it will be no excuse for mee; if I say the world allured, or Satan tempted me, it booteth me nor: and therefore, Father, I cannot but freely confesse against my selfe, that I, euen I haue sinned, and done all these euills against thee, against thee, O Lord, I haue sinned, & against my selfe, and haue deseruedly stirred vp thy displeasure against me, and in thy displeasure is death.

This,

*Dauids resolution.* 377

This, this, O Lord, is the  
gaine that my sinnes haue  
gotten, not onely a dissolution  
of the soule and body due to  
all flesh: but the death of bo-  
dy and soule due onely to  
impenitent sinners, among  
whom I, euen I, acknowledge  
my selfe worthy to bee num-  
bred without thy mercy. For  
who hath power, Lord, by  
his owne corrupt nature to  
repent? By nature, Lord, I  
sinne: How can I by the same  
sinfull part, repent of that  
wherein nature it selfe deligh-  
teth? A fountaine bringeth  
not forth bitter water and  
sweet: How then Lord can I  
bring forth true repentance  
out of a corrupt heart, as it is  
cor-

378 The Imitation of

corrupt? Yet Lord, though my heart bee corrupt by nature, being made in part sincere and holy by thy grace, it shall so farre forth worke repentance, as is thy grace powerfull and effectuell in me. So that though sinne by nature dwell in me, by thy grace may sanctity also; as *Eſau* and *Iaakob* in *Rebeccahs* wombe, struing for superiority.

Therefore, good Father, as *Eſau* the elder, gaue place and became seruant to *Iaakob*: So let sinne, which is in me the first borne, giue place in mee vnto sanctity: And let sanctity haue the sole dominion in my heart, then shall my heart bring forth the good fruits of

a

*Dauids resolution.* 397

a godly life : though while I  
liue here, the weeds of cor-  
ruption will also grow ; but  
Lord, let them not ouergrow  
the good seed of thy spirit : but  
let them wither and die before  
they grow vp to beare any  
fruit vnto death. But seed me  
now at the last with the most  
wholesome fruits of thy spirit,  
and giue me grace to expresse  
my sorrow for my sins that I  
haue done with an inward re-  
lenting heart, grieued that e-  
uer I contriued sin in my in-  
ward thoughts, that euer I  
acted it, or consented vnto it.

Lord see and behold my sor-  
row for my sins, if it bring not  
forth sincere repentance, water  
it so with thy mollifying spi-  
rit.

The Imitation of  
rit, that it may worke in mee  
that which may testifie that I  
repent indeed : so that sinne  
may become loathsome vnto  
me, and sanctitie sweet. And  
although while I carrie about  
me this vnholly lump of earth,  
my best exercises cannot but  
saueur of the fountaine from  
whence they flow ; if of cor-  
ruption, corruptly ; if of thy  
spirit, heauenly.

O season therefore my  
heart, O Lord, my soule and  
whole man with thy spirit,  
that whatsoeuer I thinke,  
speake, or doe, may saueur  
from aboue, that I may feele in  
my heart and soule a true and  
liuely detestation of whatsoe-  
uer saoureth of the loue of  
this

*Dauids resolution.* 381

this world; as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

Giue me strength to performe all perfect obedience in all righteousness, euen to the forgetting of sinne. And yet to remember my sinnes past, and to repent them, that thou my louing Father, before whose presence I presently stand, maiest bee pleased to turne thy louing and fatherly countenance in mercy towards me, in the merits and mediation of Christ my Redeemer.

Let these mine humble petitions, O Lord, ascend vp vnto thee; and let the infallible tokens of thy mercies appeare towards

towards mee: that my heart  
now cast downe for feare of  
thy iudgements, may bee a-  
gaine lifted vp, feeling the in-  
ward testimonies of thy mer-  
cies in Christ. To whom with  
thee and the holy Ghost, be  
all honour, praise, and glory.

*A Praier for the morning,  
with thanks for rest and  
safetie.*

**O**Father, mercifull and e-  
uermore louing in Iesus  
Christ, who this night past  
hast beene a powerfull and  
prouident Watch-man ouer  
me, euen when by the dead-  
nesse of sleepe I was deprived,  
euen

*Dauids resolution.* 383

euē of sense, care or feare of  
any danger, which yet with-  
out thy preservation and pro-  
uidence, might suddenly haue  
seized vpon me, and that by  
infinite meanes: For, Lord,  
thou knowest what a malici-  
ous and watchfull Aduersary  
we haue, who is attended on  
by a troupe of infernall Mini-  
sters that hourly seeke by  
some meanes to surprize vs:  
Besides the corruption of our  
owne nature, that is alwaies  
working in vs sinfull  
thoughts, vncleane desires,  
and most vngodly affections:  
mouing vs in our night-wa-  
kings (in stead of holy medi-  
tation and godly praier) to  
purpose the committing of  
infinite

The Imitation of  
infinite sorts of finnes, when  
we enter into the day, hauing  
no meanes to preuent the exe-  
cution of most sinfull actions,  
but by thine owne most gra-  
cious working holy feare  
and godly obedience in our  
hearts : Wherefore, louing  
Father, I come this morning  
into thy holy presence, from  
which I cannot hide mee,  
and vpon the knees of my  
heart I vnfaignedly intreat  
thee, that as it hath pleased  
thee this night to preserue  
me, and giuing me comforta-  
ble rest and sleepe in safetrie ; so  
thou wilt be pleased to watch  
ouer mee this day that no  
danger befall me, either in  
body, soule, or any thing be-  
longing

*Dauids resolution.* 385

longing vnto me ; But that I  
may be so led vnder the pau-  
lion of thy protection, guided  
by thy spirit, that neither in  
thought, word or deed I may  
offend thee ; endeououring to  
performe all holy and hea-  
uenly duties vnto thee my  
God, who for all thy mercies  
requirest onely pure and sin-  
cere obedience, which is also  
thy gift: for none by his owne  
power can thinke a good  
thought, much lesse Lord,  
worke any thing pleasing vn-  
to thee, but the contrary:  
therefore disclaime I all mine  
owne merit, and cleaue onely  
vnto thy mercy in Iesus  
Christ ; Humbly beseeching  
thee for his sake to take

T charge

The Imitation of  
charge of me this day: pre-  
uent the malicious intentions  
of Satan and his ministers:  
mortifie mine owne sinfull  
affections, and infuse into my  
heart all diuine graces, that my  
waies this day may nothing  
saue of sinne, but of sancti-  
tie. And as I haue by thee safe-  
ly passed this night; so I may  
begin, continue and end this  
day, and all the daies of my  
life, in thy faith, feare, and o-  
bedience. And that in all  
mine actions whereunto I am  
bound by my place and cal-  
ling, I may so walke and so  
performe them, as that thy  
blessing may accompany  
whatsoever I endeavour. Giue  
me Lord an vpright heart, af-  
king;

*Dauids resolution.* 387

king; and let me euer receiue counsell from thee, to be guided in whatsoeuer I purpose: that so prospering, the glory may bee thine, to whom all power, wisdom, strength, and glory belongeth, *Amen.*

*A Praier to be used before a man goes to his rest.*

**L**ord, as it hath now pleased thee to bring mee in safetie to the end of this day, and hast therein by many blessings testified thy fatherly care ouer me: so let my heart within me through faith, and faithfull obedience, testifie mine vnfained thankfulness

T 2

to

The Imitation of  
to thee. The light of this day  
hath afforded vnto mee that  
benefit which the darknesse  
of the night could not,  
though to thee the day and  
night are of equall light; for  
with thee is no darknesse at  
all. But to me, as I am blinde  
by nature, the day and night  
are of like darknesse and ob-  
scuritie: though the light of  
the day discouer visible crea-  
tures, yet as long as the darke-  
nesse of the ignorance of hea-  
uenly things possesseth my in-  
ward parts, I see not at all as I  
ought to see: the light of the  
day doth administer vnto my  
corporall eies many outward  
objects, which often causeth  
me inwardly to erre, and out-  
wardly

*Dauids resolution.* 389

wardly to goe astray, as the  
sinnes which I haue this day  
committed, by the miscarriage  
of mine eye may witnessse  
against me. Forgiue it Lord  
vnto me, and grant that the  
light which thou hast created  
good, turne not through my  
corruption to thy dishonour  
and my shame, but as the light  
of the day is a most especiall  
blessing to the good, to doe  
good offices in this life; so let  
me vse it to the doing of the  
works of diuine light, not of  
darknesse. Let it hence-forth  
serue vnto mee as a Motiue to  
the Contemplation of that  
celestiall light, that is neuer  
ouershadowed with darknesse;  
and to the obseruation of

T 3

thine

390 . The Imitation of  
thine immensurable great-  
nesse and power in creating  
and preserving of thy Crea-  
tures, ( visible ) numberlesse.  
Giue me grace, that I behol-  
ding the infinite works of thy  
hands, may with diuine mode-  
sty consider thy wisdom in  
framing and disposing them ;  
thy deepe and vnfathomable  
prouidence, in oftentimes  
turning those things to the  
comfort of those that are  
thine, which their enemies  
suppose and hope will tend to  
their confusion. This also is  
thy doing, marvellous in the  
eyes of such as either know  
thee not, or that thinke all  
things to come to passe with-  
out thy direction and limitati-  
on.

Lord

*Dauids resolution.* 391

Lord I haue this day found,  
that thy wisdom hath directed  
me, thy power hath preserved  
mee, and thy providence  
guided me. And in thy  
great mercy I haue finished  
this day in safetie, and recei-  
ued many blessings at thy  
hands; acknowledging yet  
my selfe vnworthy of the  
least of them, by reason that I  
haue many waies offended  
thee. Though I haue not no-  
ted in my thoughts all my  
sinnes, yet thou knowest  
them: And if the righteous  
man fall seven times a day,  
how often haue I that am all  
corrupt, sinned this day?  
None is so iust as sinneth  
not, but he is blessed to whom

T 4

thou

392 The Imitation of  
thou ( O Lord ) imputeſt it  
not.

Sinners couet ſecrecy, they  
hate to be ſcene, but loue the  
ſinne: darkneſſe is their de-  
ſire, and thenight is as a Clo-  
ſet to hide them in conceit,  
when thou, O God, ſeeſt their  
actions in the darke as at  
noone day. O preſerue mee  
in thy light, Lord, and grant  
I neuer couet to doe that in ſe-  
cret, whereof I ſhould be a-  
ſhamed to commit it openly:  
and euen this night now  
come vpon mee, vouchſafe  
Lord to ouerspread the bright  
beames of thine all ſhining  
light ouer me that ſinne enter  
not into my heart in the  
darkneſſe of the ſame. And  
let

*Dauids resolution.* 393

let me make my night wakings as interims gained for Meditation and Praier; And that I may spend the intermissions of my sleepe in preparing my selfe to my finall rest: That through thy power and prouidence, I may rest safely this night, free from all danger of soule and body: And that rising againe in the morning, I may not bee forgetfull to giue thee the glory. And as the night succeedeth the day, and the day the night; so let my faithfull praiers succeed holy Meditation, and a holy endeouour to worke righteousness, succeed my faithfull petitions.

Let thine eares be open vnto

394 The Imitation, &c.

to my praiers : Let thine eies  
( by way of blessing ) be vpon  
all mine actions : Let thy pro-  
vidence preuent whatsoeuer  
mischiefe, Satan, or any mine  
enemies his complices shall  
plot, practise, or endeuour to  
execute against me : In hope  
whereof, I doe commit and  
commend my selfe, my soule  
and body, and whatsoeuer  
concerneth me, into thy most  
powerfull protection this  
night, in the name of Christ,  
thine alone beloued. To  
whom with thee and the holy  
Ghost be ascribed, as most  
due, all honour, praise and  
glory for euer, *Amen.*

*Lord enermore increase  
my faith.*

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